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THE WORKER AND HIS BIBLE

By
F. C. EISELEN *and*
WADE CRAWFORD BARCLAY

Approved by the Committee on Curriculum
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PART I

INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY OF THE BIBLE

By F. C. Eiselen

CHAPTER I

THE BIBLE—A BODY OF LITERATURE

1. The Bible a Collection of Books. The word *Bible* is derived from the Greek. It is the plural form *biblia* of a noun *biblion,* which may be translated "Little Book." From the Greek language the word passed into the Latin, where *biblia* came to be regarded as a noun in the singular. As such it was early adopted into the language of the western Church, and it is so used in the languages of modern Europe. The use of the noun as a singular is responsible for much misapprehension, because the Bible can never be rightly appreciated unless it is borne in mind that it is not so much one book as a library consisting of many books, written by different authors, in different times and places, and representing different stages of religious and ethical development. There are sixty-six separate writings in the collection as found in the modern English translations. The Bible is divided into two great divisions called the Old Testament and the New Testament respectively. The designation *Testament* is somewhat misleading. It arose from an accidental mistranslation into Latin of a Greek word meaning *covenant,* which in turn goes back to a Hebrew word having the same meaning. Hence it would be far more accurate to speak of the Old Covenant and the New Covenant; and, indeed, one of the early Church fathers speaks of "the divine Scriptures, the so-called Old and New Covenants." We have, then, in the Old and New Testaments various records of the two

dispensations, or covenants, centering in Moses and Jesus respectively.

2. Contents of the Old Testament. Of the sixty-six books in the Bible, thirty-nine belong to the Old Testament, twenty-seven to the New. The thirty-nine books of the Old Testament are ordinarily arranged in four groups:

I.	*Law*—Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, Deuteronomy	5
II.	*History*—Joshua, Judges, Ruth, 1 and 2 Samuel, 1 and 2 Kings, 1 and 2 Chronicles, Ezra, Nehemiah, Esther	12
III.	*Poetry*—Job, Psalms, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, Song of Songs	5
IV.	*Prophecy*—(1) Major Prophets: Isaiah, Jeremiah, Lamentations, Ezekiel, Daniel	5
	(2) Minor Prophets: Hosea, Joel, Amos, Obadiah, Jonah, Micah, Nahum, Habakkuk, Zephaniah, Haggai, Zechariah, Malachi	12
	Total	39

3. Contents of the New Testament. The twenty-seven books of the New Testament may be arranged in three groups:

I.	*Historical*—The Gospels: Matthew, Mark, Luke, John; The Acts	5
II.	*Doctrinal*—The Epistles: Romans, 1 and 2 Corinthians, Galatians, Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, 1 and 2 Thessalonians, 1 and 2 Timothy, Titus, Philemon, Hebrews, James, 1 and 2 Peter, 1, 2, and 3 John, Jude	21
III.	*Apocalyptic*—Revelation	1
	Total	27

The four Gospels portray, from different viewpoints, the life, teaching, and work of Jesus; Acts records the founding of the Christian Church and its earliest history, centering the account chiefly around the experiences of Peter and Paul. The doctrinal books are in the form of letters, written by the leaders of the Christian movement to Churches and individuals for the purpose of instructing them more fully in the faith and aiding them in various crises confronting the Christians during the early years of the Church's history. Revelation is in the form of a vision portraying the ultimate triumph of the kingdom of God.

4. Different Kinds of Literature in the Old Testament. The Bible contains sublime specimens of history, law, poetry, oratory, in fact, of almost every kind of literature known outside of the Bible. To the inquiry concerning the reason of these different kinds of literature the writer of the Epistle to the Hebrews suggests an answer in the words (1:1) "God having spoken . . . *in divers manners;*" which means that in His attempt to reach the human heart and conscience God used different methods and means. For example, God may reveal Himself in the events of history, or He may make His appeal through the object lessons of the ritual and ceremonial; He may use as mediators especially well qualified individuals, to whom He can make Himself known, or He may dispense with the external means and influence more directly the human soul. These are some of the means by which God makes Himself known to-day, and these are some of the means by which God made Himself known during the period covered by the Biblical records. It is self-evident that when attempts are made to record or interpret these various manifestations of God different kinds of literature must be used, in order to portray most vividly the truth or truths expressed by God. The several kinds of literature, therefore, are the natural outgrowth of the manifold modes of divine revelation. In the Old Testament five kinds of literature may be distinguished: the Pro-

phetic, the Wisdom, the Devotional, the Legal or Priestly, and the Historical. In their production four classes of religious workers were active: the Prophets, the Wise Men, the Priests (compare Jer. 18:18), and the Psalmists.

a. The Prophetic Literature of the Old Testament. The Prophetic Literature owes its origin to prophetic activity. The prophets towered above their contemporaries through purity of character, strength of intellect, sincerity of purpose, intimacy of communion with God, and special illumination by the Divine Spirit. As a result of these qualifications they were able to see facts and understand truths hidden from the eyes and minds of those who did not live in the same intimate fellowship with Jehovah. Their high conceptions of the character of God enabled them to appreciate the divine ideals of righteousness, and they sought with flaming enthusiasm to impress the truths burning in their hearts upon their less enlightened contemporaries. In carrying out this purpose they became statesmen, social reformers, and religious and ethical teachers. No records have been preserved of the utterances of the earliest prophets; but when, with the general advance in culture, reading and writing became more common, the prophets, anxious to reach a wider circle and to preserve their messages for more willing ears, put their messages into writing; and to this new departure we owe the sublime specimens of prophetic literature in the Old Testament.

b. The Wisdom Literature of the Old Testament. In his direct appeal to heart and conscience the ancient prophet resembles the modern preacher. Like the prophet and the preacher, the Wise Man sought to make the Divine will known to others, but in his method he resembles rather the modern religious teacher. His ultimate aim was to influence conduct and life, but instead of appealing directly to the conscience, he addressed himself primarily to the mind through counsel and argument, hoping that his appeal to the common sense of the listener would make an impression, the

effects of which might be seen in transformed conduct. The prophet would have said to the lazy man, "Thus saith Jehovah, Go to work, thou indolent man." Proverbs 24:30-34 may serve as an illustration of the method of the Wise Men:

> "I went by the field of the slothful,
> And by the vineyard of the man void of understanding;
> And lo, it was all grown over with thorns,
> The face thereof was covered with nettles,
> And the stone wall thereof was broken down.
> Then I beheld, and considered well:
> I saw, and received instruction.
> Yet a little sleep, a little slumber,
> A little folding of the hands to sleep:
> So shall thy poverty come as a robber,
> And thy want as an armed man."

Nothing escaped the observation of these men; and from beginning to end they emphasized the important truth that religion and the daily life are inseparable. From giving simple practical precepts the wise men rose to speculation, and the Books of Job and Ecclesiastes bear witness that the problems they attempted to solve were no mean problems.

c. The Devotional Literature of the Old Testament. In a real sense the entire Old Testament is a book of devotion. It is the outgrowth of a spirit of intense devotion to Jehovah, and it has helped in all ages to nurture the devotional spirit of its readers. Here, however, the term *devotional* is used in the narrower sense of those poetic compositions which are primarily the expressions of the religious experience or emotions of the authors, caused and fostered by their intimate fellowship with Jehovah. The chief representative of this literature is the Book of Psalms, which is aptly described by Johannes Arndt in these words, "What the heart is in man that is the Psalter in the Bible." The Psalms contain, in the form of sacred lyrics, the outpourings of devout souls, prophets, priests, kings, wise men, and peasants, who came into the very presence of God, held

communion with Him, and were privileged to hear the sweet sound of His voice. No other literary compositions lift us into such atmosphere of religious thought and emotion. And because these lyrics express personal experiences, they may be used even to-day to express the various emotions of joy, sorrow, hope, fear, anticipation, and others, of persons who live on even a higher plane than did the original authors.

d. The Legal Literature of the Old Testament. The Legal Literature of the Old Testament differs from the other kinds in that it does not form separate books, but is embodied in other writings, principally in the books of Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy. All the representatives of Jehovah—prophets, priests, wise men, and even psalmists—were thought competent to make known the *Law* of Jehovah, but the Old Testament makes it clear that at a comparatively early period the giving of the law came to be looked upon as the special duty of the priests. These priests constituted a very important class of religious workers among the ancient Hebrews. During the greater part of the national life of Israel their chief functions were the care of the sanctuary and the performance of the ceremonial rites, but alongside of that they continued to administer the Law of Jehovah, consisting not only of ceremonial regulations, but also of moral and judicial precepts and directions. For centuries these laws may have been transmitted by word of mouth, or were only partially committed to writing, but when circumstances made it desirable to codify them and put them in writing, the priests would be called upon to take this advance step. Thus, while it is quite probable that other representatives of Jehovah helped to formulate laws, the legal literature embodied in the Old Testament reached its final form under priestly influence.

e. The Historical Literature of the Old Testament. The historical literature of the Old Testament furnishes an interpretation of the movements of God in the events of history.

It owes its origin in part to prophetic, in part to priestly, activity. The prophet was an ambassador of Jehovah, appointed to make known the Divine will concerning (1) the past, (2) the present, and (3) the future. Of the present he spoke as a preacher; when his message concerned the future, it took the form of prediction. But the case might arise that the people failed to understand the significance of events in their own history, and thus failed to appreciate the lessons which the events were intended to teach. If the lessons were not to be lost, some one must serve as an interpreter; and who would be better qualified than the prophet to furnish the right interpretation? This demand made of him, in a sense, an historian; not for the purpose of merely recording events, but of interpreting them at the same time; and these prophetic interpretations are embodied in the historical literature. But not all Old Testament history comes from the prophets. As already indicated, the legal and ceremonial literature is due to priestly activity. Now, in connection with the recording of the laws, customs, institutions, and ceremonial requirements, the origin of these laws and customs became a matter of interest and importance. This interest, and the demand for information arising from it, led the priests also to become historians; and to these priestly writers we are indebted for not a small part of sacred history.

5. Various Kinds of New Testament Literature. Several distinct kinds of literature may be recognized in the New Testament. All its writings center around Jesus the Christ, and in one way or another seek to interpret the supreme revelation of God in and through Him. Jesus was an historical person; His life and activity were historical events. It is but natural, therefore, that the New Testament should contain *historical writings,* namely, the Gospels, whose primary purpose is to record and interpret the life and activity of Jesus. The work of establishing the kingdom of God upon earth, begun by Jesus, was continued by His disciples,

and assumed organized form in the formation of Churches. The progress of these events is recorded in another *historical book,* entitled The Acts.

Every new movement gives rise to problems and perplexities. Christianity was no exception. Very soon perplexing questions began to disturb the newly organized Churches. Individuals failed to grasp the true significance of the new teaching; corruption and schisms threatened to disrupt the believers. In these extremities the leaders in the new faith were appealed to for guidance and inspiration. Since they could not visit all the places where Christians sought their counsel, they sometimes sent their advice in the form of letters, which practice has given rise to the extensive *epistolary literature* in the New Testament. The closing book, *Revelation,* is the only one of its kind in the New Testament Canon. It has its counterparts in the Old Testament in the Book of Daniel, and portions of the Books of Ezekiel and Zechariah. It belongs to what is commonly called apocalyptic literature, the latest form of prophetic writing. *Revelation* is the outgrowth of the early Christian persecutions, and its aim is to encourage the distressed Christians by the assurance of the ultimate triumph of the kingdom of God.

Lesson Outline:

The Bible a collection of books.
Contents of the Old Testament.
Contents of the New Testament.
Different kinds of Old Testament literature.
Different kinds of New Testament literature.

Bibliography:

Kirkpatrick, "The Divine Library of the Old Testament."
Kent, "The Origin and Permanent Value of the Old Testament."

Topics for Special Study:

1. Wisdom literature in the Old Testament in other than distinctively Wisdom Books.
2. The earliest psalms, or songs, of the Old Testament.
3. The forms of literature in the Old Testament in detail.

Topics for Class Discussion:

1. What are the groups of Old Testament books?
2. Discuss the various functions of the prophet.
3. In what various ways has God made Himself known to man?
4. The kinds of literature in the Old Testament, with examples.

CHAPTER II

THE BIBLE—RECORDS OF DIVINE REVELATION

1. The New Testament Estimate of the Bible. From the very beginning until now the Christian Church has looked upon the Bible as one of the most useful means to promote intelligent and vital piety, to intensify spiritual life and experience, to instruct in Christian activity and service. This conviction, as far as the Old Testament is concerned, finds expression in unambiguous language in 2 Tim. 3: 15-17: "The sacred writings are able to make wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus. Every Scripture inspired of God is also profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for instruction which is in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, furnished completely unto every good work." What is said here of the Old Testament is equally true of the Scriptures of the New Testament. In the words of Cyprian, one of the early Church fathers, "The more closely one scrutinizes the sacred Scriptures of both Testaments, the greater increase in faith and inward devotion will he derive therefrom." Since these words were spoken, thousands of the most eminent men and women in all conditions of life and society have testified to the inestimable value of the Bible as a means of grace to the individual, and an essential factor in all advancement of true civilization.

What gives to the Bible this unique power? The answer to this inquiry is implied in the above quoted words of the

apostle, "Every scripture *inspired* of God." The presence of divine inspiration is the secret of the Bible's power. That such a divine element was present in the Old Testament was recognized by Jesus and all New Testament writers. And surely it is a significant fact that in the first outburst of Christian enthusiasm, and under the living impression of the unique personality of the Master, no doubt arose concerning the inspiration and permanent value of the Old Testament. In 2 Peter 1:21 the unqualified assertion is made that "no prophecy ever came by the will of man, but men spake from God as they were moved by the Holy Ghost." And the first great apologist of Christianity opens the Epistle to the Hebrews with these significant words, "God having of old time spoken unto the fathers in the prophets by divers portions, and in divers manners hath in the end of these days spoken unto us in a Son." If such assertion can be made of the Old Testament, how much more of the New, with its superior spiritual and ethical teaching!

To avoid misunderstanding it may be well to bear in mind in the very beginning what the New Testament says or implies concerning the purpose and aim of Biblical teaching. For it is of the greatest importance to remember that we can learn what the Bible is only from what the Bible itself says. Now, everywhere in the New Testament it is stated or clearly implied that the purpose of Scripture is to point to the Christ, to bring man into harmony with God, to make him morally and spiritually perfect, and to furnish him "unto every good work." Not one passage in the whole Bible warrants the belief that the Biblical writers ever intended to teach physical science, or history, or philosophy, or psychology. Therefore we may expect that where the Biblical writers touch upon questions of science or history they develop them only to the extent that they serve the higher religious or ethical purpose. For this, absolute scientific or historical accuracy in every detail is by no means necessary.

2. Truths Suggested in Hebrews 1 : 1, 2. The words quoted from the Epistle to the Hebrews suggest or imply five great truths which have an important bearing upon the present inquiry: (1) God spoke. (2) God spoke *through human agents.* (3) God spoke *in divers portions.* (4) God spoke *in divers manners.* (5) The speaking during the Old Testament dispensation—to it refers the expression "of old time"—was incomplete; it had to be supplemented and perfected by a revelation in and through a Son. In order to appreciate properly the nature and purpose of the Scriptures, all these truths must be borne in mind. It is especially important to remember that God used human agents in the attempt to make Himself known to men, and these agents left the marks of their human limitations in the records. But it is equally essential to remember that it is God who spoke; in other words, that there is a divine element in the Bible.

3. Evidences of the Presence of a Divine Element. Nothing can be gained by denying the presence of a human element in the Bible. At the same time it should not be overestimated, or blind the eyes to the other truth expressed by the writer of the Epistle to the Hebrews, that there is also a divine element in the writings of the Bible. As far as the Old Testament is concerned this was recognized by Jesus and all the New Testament writers. Their testimony should carry great weight with Christians. But without appealing to such authority, every unbiased reader may convince himself of the nature and character of the book. It is ready for examination and invites the closest scrutiny on the part of every student.

Former generations based the principal arguments in favor of the belief in a divine element in the Bible upon the presence of miracles in its records, and the fulfillment of prophecy. The present generation, while still using these arguments, places greater stress upon evidences which are simpler and more easily apprehended. Three of the most

important may be considered here: (1) The essential unity of the book; (2) the response of the human heart and conscience to its message, and the effects it produces in the lives of those who yield themselves to its teaching; (3) the uniqueness of the Bible as seen when it is compared with other sacred literatures of antiquity.

a. The Essential Unity of the Bible. In the first place, then, attention may be called to the essential unity of the Bible. There are in the Old World great and magnificent cathedrals, some of which have been centuries in building, yet in all of them is complete unity and harmony. How can this be explained? Although generation after generation multitudes of workmen have labored on the enterprise, back of all the efforts was one single plan, evolved in the mind of one man, and this mind controlled all the succeeding generations of workmen. The result is unity and harmony. The Bible has been likened to a magnificent cathedral. The phenomenon to which reference has just been made in connection with ancient cathedrals may be seen in it. It contains sixty-six books—by how many authors no one knows—scattered over a period of more than a thousand years, written, at least many of them, independent of one another, in places hundreds of miles apart; yet one thought running throughout them all, *the gradual unfolding of God's plan of redemption for the human race.* There must be an explanation for this unity; and I believe that it is to be found in the one spirit which dwelt in and somehow influenced the men who made contributions to the Book.

b. The Response of the Human Heart and Conscience to the Bible Message. The proof of the presence of a divine element in the Bible which is derived from the essential unity of the Book is confirmed by the response of the human heart and conscience to its message, and the effects which it produces in the lives of those who yield themselves to its teaching. Never has there been a book that has been able to "find"

men as the Bible has done generation after generation, among peoples in all stations of society, in all lands and climes. The bearing of this remarkable fact upon the question of the divine inspiration of the Bible is stated very aptly by Coleridge in his *Letters on the Inspiration of the Scriptures:* "Need I say that I have found everywhere more or less copious sources of truth, and power, and purifying impulses; that I have found words for my inmost thoughts, songs for my joy, utterances for my hidden griefs, and pleadings for my shame and feebleness? In short, *whatever 'finds' me bears witness for itself that it has proceeded from a Holy Spirit, even from the same Spirit which, remaining it itself, yet regenerateth all other powers, and in all ages entering into holy souls maketh them friends of God and prophets.*"

The test "By their fruits ye shall know them" leads to the same result. No other book has produced such far-reaching results. Sinful and sorrowing men have come to the Bible and have found the way of forgiveness and peace. They have been transformed from old evil lives of wickedness and vice to new and beautiful lives of righteousness. But the fruits are seen not only in the lives of individuals, but of entire nations. The nations enjoying the highest and most advanced civilization are the nations with an open Bible. Froude, the historian, declares, "All that we have in the way of civilization in a sense which deserves the term is but a visible expression of the transforming influence of the gospel." So also Daniel Webster, "If we abide by the principles taught in the Bible, our country will go on prospering and to prosper; but if we and our posterity neglect its instruction and authority, no man can tell how sudden a catastrophe may overwhelm us and bury our glory in profound obscurity." True, there are dark spots on modern civilization even in Christian lands, but these could not continue to exist for a day were the Bible teaching applied consistently to all the details of individual, social, and national life. But a book which produces such divine results bears witness to

itself that it embodies truth which, in some real sense, proceeded from God. As long as the Bible awakens this response and produces these effects, men will believe that it contains a divine element. And it will accomplish these things wherever and whenever men are willing to study it intelligently and devoutly, and to yield themselves to its teaching as it appeals to their own best selves. What the Bible calls for is not a defense, but earnest and devout study.

c. The Uniqueness of the Bible. The value and significance of the facts mentioned can not easily be overestimated. But during the past century other proofs have become available, as a result of the careful and painstaking study of the Bible by scholars in many lands and from various points of view. In the pursuit of this study four tests have been applied to the Bible: the test of criticism, of archæology, of comparative religion, and of science. As a result the origin and literary form of the Biblical books have come to be better understood, and while certain previously held ideas have had to be modified, the peculiar uniqueness of the Bible, when compared with other sacred literatures of antiquity, has been revealed as never before. This uniqueness consists principally in the pure and lofty atmosphere which permeates the whole from beginning to end. One may read its stories of prehistoric times, its records of history both in the Old and the New Testament, its law, its poetry, its prophecy, or its doctrinal writings, and everywhere he will find an intensity and purity of religious tone and spirit which is absent from similar literatures of other nations and bears witness to the presence of God in a manner in which He can not be recognized in other literatures.

Lesson Outline:

New Testament estimate of the Bible.
The presence of a human element in the Bible.
Evidences of a Divine element.

Bibliography:

Sanday, "The Oracles of God."
Dods, "The Bible, Its Origin and Nature."
Farrar, "The Bible, Its Meaning and Supremacy."
Smyth, "How God Inspired the Bible."

Topics for Special Study:

1. The kind and degree of inspiration which the Scriptures claim for themselves.
2. The New Testament estimate of the Old, in detail.
3. The unique qualities of the Bible as compared with other sacred literatures of antiquity.

Topics for Class Discussion:

1. The explanation of the unique power of the Bible as a means of grace.
2. The supreme purpose of inspiration.
3. Discuss the response of the human heart and conscience to the message of the Bible.
4. The effect of the Bible upon the life of nations.
5. Other evidences of divine quality in the Scriptures.

CHAPTER III

HOW WE GOT OUR BIBLE

1. The Canon of Scripture. In referring to the two collections of Biblical books it is customary to speak of the Old Testament Canon and the New Testament Canon. The word *Canon,* which is derived from the Greek, means primarily a straight rod, a measuring rod. From this it derives the secondary meaning, line, rule, and even law. The meaning list or catalogue marks a still later development. The name was applied to the books of the Bible first in the second half of the fourth century A. D., but the idea underlying the adoption of the term was recognized much earlier. It was believed that the books set apart into the Canon were given by inspiration, that in some way God spoke in and through them. The Canon of Scripture, therefore, may be defined as a collection of books given by inspiration of God, through which the Divine Spirit may appeal to the human heart and conscience.

2. The Origin and Growth of the Old Testament Canon. The Old Testament Canon was formed among the Jews, from whom it was taken over by the early Christians. The exact steps by which the Jewish Canon grew into its final form it may not be possible to determine; but it is now quite generally admitted that the three-fold division of the Jewish Canon into the *Law,* the *Prophets,* and the *Writings* marks three stages in the growth of the Old Testament Canon. The available evidence, which is none too definite, would seem to indicate that the *Law* was accepted as canon-

ical as early as 400 B. C.; the *Law,* the *Prophets,* and at least some of the *Writings,* about 180 B. C.; practically all the Old Testament books were accepted as canonical by the opening of the Christian era. The setting apart of these books was not an arbitrary act. The Spirit who inspired the writer appealed to the reader through the writing, and if a writing thus appealed as sacred to a sufficient number of people, it retained that position until official action could put its seal upon its sanctity. The final official decision was rendered at the Jewish Council at Jamnia, about 90 A. D. Questions of canonicity raised at a later time were settled by appeal to the action of this council.

3. **The Origin and Growth of the New Testament Canon.** In the case of the Old Testament the action of the Council of Jamnia appears to have been accepted as binding by practically the entire Jewish world. No such general action was taken with reference to the New Testament books until the sixteenth century of the Christian era. Local councils dealt with the question, but their decisions were not universally binding. A canon attributed to the Council of Laodicea (about 360 A. D.), representing the Eastern Church, contains all the New Testament books except Revelation. The Third Council of Carthage (397 A. D.), representing the Western Church, ordered that "besides the Canonical Scriptures nothing be read in the Church under the title of Divine Scriptures." The list of canonical books given contained all our New Testament books. Though the action of this council may not have been immediately accepted as binding by the whole Church, there can be no question that ultimately its decision came to be recognized as authoritative. The principle underlying the formation of the New Testament Canon is, as in the case of the Old Testament, the fact of inspiration. The actual process of formation is described by Adeney in these words: "Primarily the question was as to what books were read in the churches at public worship. Those so used became in course of time the Christian Scriptures.

Then, having the value of Scripture gradually associated with them, they came to be employed as the basis of instruction, and to be appealed to in disputed cases of doctrine or discipline."

4. The Transmission of the Old Testament. The Old Testament books, with the exception of a few small portions (two words in Gen. 31:47; Jer. 10:11; Dan. 2:4—7:28; Ezra 4:8—6:18; 7:12-26), which are in Aramaic, were written in the Hebrew language. Whether any of the books were ever inscribed on tablets is uncertain, but from very early times to the invention of printing they were handed down in the form of manuscripts written on leather, parchment, papyrus, and later also on paper. Until about the fifth century A. D. the manuscripts contained only the consonants, but when Hebrew became more and more a dead language the Jewish scribes invented a system of vowels, which were introduced into the later manuscripts intended for popular use; the Synagogue rolls continuing without vowel points. The Hebrew manuscripts now known are few, and they are of comparatively late date. Leaving aside some whose dates are somewhat uncertain, the oldest Hebrew manuscript of the prophets comes from 916 A. D.; the oldest Hebrew manuscript of the whole Old Testament from 1010 A. D. The first portion of the Hebrew Old Testament to be printed was the Psalter, in 1477 A. D.; the whole Old Testament was printed in 1488 A. D.

5. The Transmission of the New Testament. The New Testament books were written in Greek, though some portions of the Gospels may have been translated from Aramaic or Hebrew sources. Like the Old Testament writings, they were handed down for centuries in the form of manuscripts. The autographs have all perished, and the vast majority of existing manuscripts are of a comparatively modern date. The most important of the ancient manuscripts now known are the *Codex Vaticanus*, dating from the fourt century, which is preserved in the Vatican Library in Rome;

the *Codex Sinaiticus*, which was discovered in the Convent of St. Catherine at the foot of Mount Sinai, also of the fourth century, now in the Imperial Library in St. Petersburg. A third manuscript is the *Codex Alexandrinus*, of the fifth century, in the British Museum. These three manuscripts each include the Old Testament in whole or in part. In addition there are about one hundred other ancient manuscripts. The first New Testament in Greek was given to the world *in printed form* in 1516 by the Dutch scholar, Erasmus. Since then numerous other editions of the Greek New Testament have been prepared until we are in possession of a Greek text which in all essentials may be considered an accurate reproduction of the autographs.

6. Early Translations of the Bible. Translations of the Old Testament were made even before the opening of the Christian era. This was due to two facts. In the first place, the Jews were scattered all over the Eastern world, and began to adopt the languages of the people among whom they lived. In the second place, even in Palestine the Aramaic language displaced the Hebrew. At a later time, when Christianity, with its emphasis on the Old Testament, spread to different nations, the demand for translations became even more urgent. As the Christians multiplied it became necessary to translate also the New Testament.

a. Early Translations. The most important early translations are: (1) The Septuagint, the translation of the Old Testament into Greek, begun about 250 B. C. (2) The Targums; that is, translations of the Old Testament into Aramaic for the use of the Jews in Palestine. The earliest layers of the Targums antedate the birth of Christ, but in their completed form they are post-Christian. (3) The Peshitto, a translation into Syriac, made for the most part in the second century A. D. for the use of the Syrian Christians. (4) The Vulgate, a Latin translation made by Jerome in 390-405 to take the place of the earlier Latin translation made

from the Septuagint probably in the second century A. D. The last two translations include also the New Testament.

b. Early Anglo-Saxon and English Translations. When Augustine, the Roman-Catholic monk, went as a missionary to England in 596, the pope sent him a Bible, the Psalter, the Gospels, and several other books of a religious character. The Bible was the *Vulgate,* and this Latin text was used in the first efforts to produce the Anglo-Saxon translations, which are the ancestors of our modern English Bible. Of these early attempts the following may be mentioned: The translation of Caedmon, a monk of Whitby, in Northumbria (died in 680). His work is less a translation than a metrical paraphrase of the Book of Genesis and of several historical portions of the Old and New Testaments. About the close of the seventh century Guthlac of Croyland prepared an interlinear translation of the Psalms; a little later Aldhelm, Bishop of Sherborne, translated the Psalms, the first fifty in prose, the rest in poetical form. Bede, the ecclesiastical historian (674-735), is credited with a translation of the entire Bible, but nothing is known of such work. More credit may be given to the tradition that he translated the Gospel of John. King Alfred (died in 901) is said to have translated some portions. Passing over several others, mention may be made of the last and, at the same time, the most extensive Anglo-Saxon translation, which is ascribed to Aelfric, Archbishop of Canterbury, about 990 A. D. All these efforts were crude and fragmentary. The early authors translated only small portions of the Bible; but we find in the later attempts a degree of fidelity to the original and a literary finish, which entitle them to great respect.

With the advent of William the Conqueror (1071), England was wholly transformed. The government was concentrated in one person, new elements of social life were introduced, commerce was wonderfully developed, and the intellectual life greatly quickened. Not the least of the transformations was that of the language. The change in

language made it necessary to prepare a new translation of the Scriptures. For more than a century there existed great political confusion, which checked literary development; but early in the thirteenth century we find a metrical paraphrase of those parts of the Gospels and Acts which were read in the church services. The next century and a half saw several other attempts at partial translations, but finally the time arrived when the people of England demanded the whole Bible in a more careful translation. In response to this demand came the great work of John Wycliffe, which forms one of the most conspicuous landmarks in the history of the English Bible. The New Testament appeared first, about 1380; in 1382, or soon afterward, certainly before the death of Wycliffe in 1384, the entire Bible was completed in its English dress. Like its forerunners, this translation was made from the Latin. Of the precise share of Wycliffe in the production of the translation it is not possible to speak with absolute certainty. That he did much of the work himself, and was the inspiration of the whole movement, can not be doubted.

c. The Translations of the Period of the Reformation. The Reformation gave new life to the movement toward popularizing the Bible. The reformers believed that the best method of overthrowing the power of the monasteries and of the Roman Church was to enable the common people to read the Bible for themselves and learn how much of the current teaching of priests and friars was without Scriptural basis. Hence it came to pass that the question of Bible translations into the vernacular of the people occupied a prominent place in the struggles of the Reformation. In Germany the popular translation was made once for all by Luther, but in England, where parties were more divided, the ultimate accomplishment required many years and the co-operation of many men.

The true father of the English Bible is Tyndale, a Franciscan priest. While studying at Cambridge he came in con-

tact with the New Testament of Erasmus. In a quiet way he began to expound the Scriptures, and his experience soon convinced him that nothing could be accomplished in the way of the spiritual elevation of the people unless the Bible could be laid before them in their mother tongue. After many hardships and perils he finally succeeded in publishing, at Worms, in Germany, a translation of the New Testament in 1525. In the following years he translated various portions of the Old Testament, but when he was strangled and burned at the stake in 1536 the larger enterprise was still incomplete. Near the time of Tyndale's death the obstacles to printing the Bible in England were removed, and now an era of great activity in Bible translations opened. Between 1535 and 1606 no less than six different translations were issued, each having its characteristic value and marking an advance over its predecessors.

Of these the translation of Myles Coverdale, published in 1535, stands first. To him belongs the honor of issuing the first complete printed English Bible. The Wycliffe Bible contained a translation of the entire Bible, but it was not printed. Tyndale issued in printed form the New Testament and parts of the Old, but did not live to see the work completed. The work of Coverdale does not profess to be made from the original languages; it is based rather upon the Vulgate, and the translations of Luther and Tyndale. Two years later, in 1537, appeared a new translation, which goes under the name of Thomas Matthew, but the real author was in all probability John Rogers, an intimate friend of Tyndale, to whom the latter had entrusted his papers at the time of his arrest. In 1539 Richard Taverner edited a Bible consisting largely of a revision of that of Matthew, omitting most of his notes and introducing much new introductory material. Taverner was one of the great Greek scholars of the age, and made good use of his knowledge in the translation of the New Testament; in the Old Testament he leans strongly on the Vulgate. Neither the Church nor the State

could become reconciled to the existing translations, although they had at last sanctioned their publication. A new translation was therefore prepared under their own supervision and published in 1539, Thomas Cromwell being the leading spirit in the movement. Because of the size of its pages it is known as the "Great Bible," or also "Cranmer's Bible," because Archbishop Cranmer prepared an elaborate prologue for the second edition, which appeared in 1540. During the later years of the reign of Henry VIII., and especially under Queen Mary, a strong reaction toward Catholicism set in, the reading of the Bible was forbidden, and the attempt was made to destroy all existing copies. Learned men of Protestant tendencies were compelled to flee from England. Of these religious exiles a company of several hundred gathered at Geneva, in Switzerland. Among the most prominent men of the English colony were William Whittingham and Myles Coverdale. They determined to prepare an English Bible of moderate size and cost, more accurate in its renderings, and accompanied with a brief commentary and such explanatory statements as were needed for a clear understanding of the text. The New Testament appeared in 1557, the entire Bible in 1560. This Bible, called the Geneva Bible, at once obtained a very wide circulation. From 1560 to 1616 not a year passed without one or more new editions.

The circulation of the English Bible was now confined to the two editions known as the Great Bible and the Geneva Bible. Neither proved entirely satisfactory; the Geneva Bible was too Calvinistic and anti-episcopal; the Great Bible showed many defects in translation. This led to the preparation of a new translation, called the "Bishops' Bible," because three-fourths of the translators were bishops. The first edition appeared in 1568. Strenuous efforts were made to have it take the place of all earlier translations, but while it became the official Bible of the Church, the Geneva Bible remained the Bible of the home.

Toward the close of the sixteenth century the zeal of the

Protestant Churches drove the Roman Church into competition with them in the production of Bible translations. The preparation of an English translation naturally fell to the scholars of the English seminary which had lately been established in France. The original home of the seminary was at Douay, but in 1578 it was transferred for a time to Rheims, as a result of political disturbances in Flanders. Here the New Testament was published in 1582. The Old Testament did not appear until 1609, when the seminary had returned to Douay. As a result the completed Bible goes by the name of the "Rheims and Douay" Bible. The most important point to be observed about this Roman-Catholic translation is that it was not made from the original Hebrew and Greek, but from the Latin Vulgate. The circulation of the Rheims and Douay version was not large; the New Testament was reprinted three times between 1582 and 1750, the Old Testament only once.

d. The Authorized Version. The Bishops' Bible did not meet with popular favor, and soon the demand for a new translation was heard. When James I became king of England in 1603 he found the country in great turmoil, the Puritans and the Church of England parties being engaged in a bitter contest for supremacy. At a conference held in January, 1604, for the purpose of considering the grievances, the subject of a new Bible translation was raised, and all agreed that such a work should be undertaken. The king chose fifty-four translators, who devoted seven years to the task, and in 1611 the new translation was published. It can not be shown that the new translation ever had any authority given to it, although on the title-page appears the statement "*appointed* to be read in churches." It had to make its way on its own merits, and for a generation had a formidable rival in the Geneva Bible, which continued to be the popular favorite; but in the end its sterling value gave it the supremacy, which it has retained ever since. According to the instruction given to the translators, they were to follow the

Bishops' Bible, except where the Hebrew and Greek demanded a change; in reality they adhered far more closely to the Geneva Bible, which aroused considerable opposition on the part of the Catholics and the High Church party of the Church of England.

e. The "English" Revised Version. The increase in knowledge of the original Greek and Hebrew texts was chiefly responsible for the demand for a revision of the so-called Authorized Version, after it had held its ground for more than two centuries. Partial translations were published by individual scholars, and finally in 1870 decisive steps were taken by the convocation of the Province of Canterbury to secure an authoritative revision of the whole English Bible in the light of the fullest modern knowledge and the best Biblical scholarship. In May, 1870, the broad principles of the Revision were laid down, and a committee of sixteen was appointed to execute the work, with power to add to its numbers. The committee divided itself into an Old Testament Company and a New Testament Company; then representative scholars of all Protestant denominations were invited to co-operate, until the membership of each company reached twenty-seven. However, deaths, resignations, and new appointments caused the exact number to vary from time to time. When the work had barely begun, an invitation was sent to the Churches in America requesting their co-operation. In response to this request two American companies were formed, to whom all the results of the English companies were communicated. The American revisers could make suggestions, but the final decision rested with the English companies. The suggestions not adopted were published in an appendix. The Revised Version represents, consequently, the deliberate opinions of a majority of the best Biblical scholars of all English-speaking Protestant Churches in the last quarter of the nineteenth century. On the twenty-second of June, 1870, the English New Testament Company held its first meeting; the Old Testament Company began

its labors eight days later. On the eleventh of November, 1880, the New Testament revisers set their signatures to the Preface of their Version, which issued from the press in May, 1881. The Old Testament Preface is dated July 10, 1884, and the entire Bible was published in May, 1885.

f. The American Revised Version. As already stated, the preferences of the American companies not adopted by the English revisers were to be published in an appendix with every copy of the Revised Version. In return for this consideration the American companies pledged themselves for a term of fourteen years—that is, until 1899—not to give sanction to the publication of any edition of the Revised Version other than those issued by the University Presses of England. The American Revision companies, after the publication of the Revised Version in 1885, resolved to continue their organization, thinking that eventually an American recension of the Revised Version might be called for. That such would be the case became a growing conviction. In 1898, a short time before the agreement regarding the publication of a Revised Version by the American companies came to an end, the University Presses of England issued a so-called "American Revised Version," which transferred the American preferences from the Appendix to the text itself. But the American revisers had been at work all these years in an attempt to improve the entire Revised Version, and the English "American Revised Version" did not meet their unqualified approval. Hence in 1901 they published the "Standard Edition of the American Revised Version," which in point of accuracy is far superior to the Revised Version of 1885.

Lesson Outline:

The Canon of Scripture—
  Old Testament Canon;
  New Testament Canon.
Transmission of the Bible—
  Of the Old Testament;
  Of the New Testament.
Translations of the Bible.

Bibliography:

Ryle, "The Canon of the Old Testament."
Price, "The Ancestry of our English Bible."
Kenyon, "Our Bible and the Ancient Manuscripts."
Smyth, "How We Got Our Bible."

Topics for Special Study:

1. The formation of the New Testament canon.
2. Existing Greek manuscripts of the New Testament.

Topics for Class Discussion:

1. What is the meaning of the term "canon?"
2. How was the Old Testament canon formed? The New Testament?
3. The different forms through which the Bible has passed in reaching its present form.
4. The reasons for the many translations of the Bible.
5. Discuss the reasons for, and the methods used in, the making of the Revised Version.

CHAPTER IV

WHY STUDY THE BIBLE

1. The Testimony of the Ages. This is a practical age. Men look at everything from an intensely practical standpoint. Hence, when the study of the Bible is urged upon them, they naturally inquire, Is is worth while? To this inquiry history answers a most emphatic Yes! Surely the words of Dean Farrar are none too strong: "How absurd it must be to scoff at a book which, through all the long centuries, thousands of great men have reverenced in proportion to their greatness; a book for which, in age after age, warriors have fought, philosophers labored, and martyrs bled! . . . All that is best and greatest in the literature of two thousand years has been rooted in it. It has inspired the career of all the best of men who 'raised strong arms to bring heaven a little nearer to our earth.' St. Vincent de Paul learned from its pages his tenderness for the poor; and John Howard his love for the suffering; and William Wilberforce his compassion for the slaves; and Lord Shaftesbury the dedication of his life to the amelioration of the lot of his countrymen. Has there been one of our foremost statesmen or our best philanthropists who has not confessed the force of its inspiration? . . . It inspired the pictures of Fra. Angelico and Raphael, the music of Handel and Mendelssohn. It kindled the intrepid genius of Luther, the bright imagination of Bunyan, the burning zeal of Whitefield. The hundred best books, the hundred best pictures, the hundred greatest strains of music are all in it and all derived from it."

Surely a book that has accomplished such things is worthy of the closest study. Or, is there reason to believe that it has lost any of its former power? No close observer will admit this. Goethe, the poet and thinker, the genius, the man of talents and scientific insight, in many respects a type of modern culture, was very fond of Bible reading; and this is what he said, among other things, concerning it: "Let culture and science go on advancing, and the mind progress as it may, it will never go beyond the elevation and moral culture of Christianity as it glistens and shines forth in the Gospels." And again, "The greater the intellectual progress of the ages, the more fully possible will it also become to employ the Bible both as the foundation and as the instrument of education—of that education by which not pedants but truly wise men are formed."

2. **Literary Excellence of the Bible.** Well has it been said that the Bible "is a literature which no age or nation can equal or supersede, though every library in the world had remained unravaged and every teacher's truest words had been written down." A great multitude of literary men have given expression to their high estimate of the literary excellence of the Bible; and the more we know of other literatures of antiquity, the more evident it becomes that even from the literary viewpoint the Bible is far superior to any other literary remains of ancient civilizations. It contains sublime specimens of history, law, poetry, oratory, and, indeed, of practically every kind of literary composition found outside of the Bible. Aside from all religious considerations, then—if we consider the study of ancient literatures an essential part of a liberal education, by what process of reasoning can we justify the exclusion of this "Book of Books" from our study?

In a small volume in the *Modern Reader's Bible,* entitled "Biblical Masterpieces," Professor Moulton has collected the best specimens of Biblical literature, but other portions are not without literary beauty and power. Indeed, as the same

author suggests, the Biblical classics are by no means inferior to the Hellenic. "If the inimitable freshness of life is preserved in Homer, it is not less preserved in the epic stories of the Old Testament (found especially in the Book of Genesis); while the still more intangible simplicity of the idyl is found perfect in *Ruth* and *Tobit;* the orations of Deuteronomy are as noble models as the orations of Cicero. Read by the side of the poetry of the Psalms, the lyrics of Pindar seem almost provincial. The imaginative poetry of the Greeks is perfect in its own sphere; but by the Hebrew prophets as bold an imagination is carried into the mysteries of the spiritual world. If the philosophy of Plato and his successors has a special interest as the starting point for a progression of thought still going on as modern science, yet the field of Biblical wisdom offers an attraction of a different kind, in a progression of thought which has run its full round and has reached a position of rest. Most interesting is it to follow the sagacity of the classic historians as they analyze a dead past; but the historic writings of the New Testament keep us in touch with the coming into being of thoughts and institutions which are with us yet in their full vigor. And in the inner circle of the world's masterpieces, in which all kinds of literary influences meet, the Bible has placed Job, the Isaiahan Rhapsody (especially chapters 1, 5, 40—53, 60—62), the Apocalypse, unsurpassed and unsurpassable."

3. **Bible Study and a Knowledge of Literature and History.** Charles Dudley Warner points out the importance of a knowledge of the Bible for a proper understanding of the world's best literature in these striking words: "Wholly apart from its religious or from its ethical value, the Bible is the one book that no intelligent person who wishes to come into contact with the world of thought and to share the ideas of the great minds of the Christian era can afford to be ignorant of. All modern literature and all art are permeated with it. There is scarcely a great work in the language that can be fully understood and enjoyed with-

out this knowledge, so full is it of allusions and illustrations from the Bible. This is true of fiction, of poetry, of economic and philosophic works, and also of the scientific and even agnostic treatises. It is not at all a question of religion, or theology, or of dogma; it is a question of general intelligence. A boy or girl at college in the presence of the works set for either to master, without a fair knowledge of the Bible is an ignoramus and is disadvantaged accordingly. It is in itself almost a liberal education, as many great masters in literature have testified. It has so entered into law, literature, thought, the whole modern life of the Christian world, that ignorance of it is a most serious disadvantage to the student."

And who can understand the history of England, Germany, the United States, and other civilized nations without a knowledge of the Scriptures? They have been the guide, the inspiration, the ennoblement, the statesman's manual of the greatest nations in the world. Even some of the dark blots in the history of these nations are to be traced to the Bible, though in these cases the Bible misinterpreted or misapplied.

4. The Unique Religious Value of the Bible. Whatever the importance of Bible study along the lines suggested in the preceding paragraphs, the permanent religious and ethical value of its teaching supplies the chief reason of its study. It would be easy to adduce thousands of testimonials to support the statement of the apostle that "the Scriptures are able to make wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus. Every Scripture inspired of God is also profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for instruction which is in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, furnished completely unto every good work." These words call attention to three stages in the Christian life: the exercise of a saving faith in Jesus, the development of a strong and noble character, and the performance of good works; in other words, faith, knowledge, service. According to the writer,

the Bible may be of the greatest value in each one of these stages, and the experience of the centuries has confirmed the claim. And what may be said of the Bible as a source of consolation! How many in the hour of sorrow, grief, and bereavement have turned to the Scriptures and there found hope and consolation (Rom. 15:4)! No wonder that Renan calls the Bible "the great book of consolation for humanity!"

The Bible possesses such unique religious value for several reasons: In the first place, it presents not the only, but surely the most comprehensive, vision of God that may be found anywhere. God, a spirit, personal, with a clearly defined moral character, in His fatherly mercy condescending to enter into covenant relations with men, loving man and desiring to be loved by him, His anger aroused by sin, but gracious toward the repenting sinner. Again, the Bible is of permanent religious value because of its keen insight into human nature. It has been called the "family album of the Holy God;" we might liken it rather to a picture gallery. What a variety! Everywhere we see them flesh and blood! Why is it they impress us so? Is it not because the pictures are so true to human nature that, in spite of the difference in time, place, and circumstances, they may serve even us as mirrors? In studying these character sketches we may learn both how men with a sublime vision of God live and should live, and how those without such a vision live and should not live. Moreover, the Bible teaches, as no other book can, how this vision of God may be ours and its powers be felt in our lives. What an inspiration to trace the workings of God throughout the centuries for the purpose of making Himself known, and to draw all men unto Him in loving obedience! And then to watch the consummation of the plan of redemption in Jesus Christ, through whom all may know God and come into vital relations with Him! And finally, all these truths are presented in a manner that even the simplest can understand. Truly, the Bible is "the one book wherein, for thousands of years, the spirit of man has found light and

nourishment, and a response to whatever was deepest in his heart."

a. The Permanent Religious Significance of the Old Testament Writings. As Christians we find our loftiest inspiration in the study of the life, character, and teaching of Jesus and of His disciples. But the New Testament has by no means displaced the Old. Jesus and His disciples found soul-food in the pages of the Old Testament and constantly exhorted their followers to do the same; and the early Christians were right in placing it beside the New Testament, for not only is a knowledge of the Old Testament necessary for a right appreciation of the New, but the Old Testament itself is still of inestimable value. True, the New Testament presents a more complete and perfect conception of the truth, but there are few New Testament truths that have not their roots in the Old; and a vast number of people, who themselves have not yet reached a state of perfection, will understand even New Testament truths more readily as they are presented in the Old Testament, for here they can see the truths in concrete form; they have flesh and blood; they are struggling for victory over darkness and superstition. Nearly all the great and vital doctrines of the Church, though founded principally on the New Testament, become more real and human, more impressive and forceful, as we study their development under the Old Testament dispensation.

Aside from these general considerations, the student can easily convince himself that every part of the Old Testament is filled with religious teaching that even to-day is of the highest importance to any one who desires to develop a pure and noble character and to serve well his day and generation. Take the first eleven chapters of Genesis—while we should not go to these chapters to study geology, astronomy, biology, or any other science, the opening chapters of Genesis do reveal what connection the world has with God, how everything may be traced to Him as the fountain head of life, that there is a unifying principle and purpose underlying the origin and

history of the globe, and many other religious and ethical truths that afford a truer conception of God, man, and of the divine plan and purpose for the latter. These chapters are followed by the stories of the patriarchs. Missionaries tell us, and experience at home has confirmed the claim, that the stories of the patriarchs are of inestimable value to impress lessons of the reality and providence of God and to encourage the exercise of faith and confidence in Him. There is nothing that can be substituted for them in religious instruction. "Abraham," says Professor Driver, "is still the hero of righteousness and faith; Lot and Laban, Sarah and Rebekah, Isaac, Jacob, and Joseph, in their characters and experiences, are still in different ways types of our own selves, and still in one way or another exemplify the ways in which God deals with the individual soul, and the manner in which the individual soul ought or ought not to respond to His leadings." The history of the Hebrews is one continuous illustration of the reality of a divine providence, and the historical books reveal on every page the hand of God in human history. In a more specific way they show the unfolding, in the mind of man, under the influence of the divine, of those great religious and ethical ideas which have become the mainspring of humanity's progress. The Hebrews have been, and their history still is, the religious and ethical teacher of mankind.

How can we estimate rightly the devotional value of the Psalter? Truly, "what the heart is in man that is the Psalter in the Bible." Here we have the outpourings of human souls in the closest fellowship with God, giving without restraint expression to the most various emotions, hopes, desires, and aspirations. What other literary compositions lift us into such atmosphere of religious thought and emotion? Surely the sweet singers enjoy a pre-eminence from which they can never be removed. Again, take the Wisdom Literature. Where do we find such compacted, sanctified common sense as in the Book of Proverbs; a more consistent application of

the principles of pure and undefiled religion to the daily life, be it of the individual, or of the family, or of the State? Where can be found more lofty religious speculation than in the Book of Job? or more persistent mental struggles with the perplexing problems of life than in Ecclesiastes, closing with the triumphant assertion, "Fear God and keep His commandments, for this is the whole duty of man?"

But in this age, when the responsibility of the individual Christian and of the Christian Church toward the practical social, moral, and religious problems and evils is recognized more than at any previous time, the prophetic literature is worthy of the most careful study on the part of all. The prophets of old met in the strength of God and at the divine impulse the problems and evils in their age. They had to face the problems of materialism and commercialism; the evils resulting from the accumulation of wealth, power, and resources in the hands of a few; very serious labor problems, cruelty, oppression, arrogance on the part of the rich proprietors; corruption in government and the administration of justice; they had to grapple with a cold, heartless formalism that threatened to destroy pure spiritual religion. Surely it is a part of our duty as Christians to do our share toward a Christian solution of the social and religious problems of the day; and in our efforts to accomplish this end we may learn much from the prophets of old. (Compare, for example, the permanent lessons of the Book of Amos pointed out in Chapter XII.)

b. The Permanent Religious Value of the New Testament. All the features that give to the Old Testament such unique value appear in even greater numbers in the New Testament, and here in a purer and more perfect form. Any one acquainted with the New Testament writings knows that their one purpose is to promote man's living union with God and to help him reflect in his own life the purity and holiness of the Divine pattern: "Be ye perfect even as your Father in heaven is perfect." How numerous are the passages con-

cerning the nature and character of God, the character and work of the Christ; the denunciations of sin and vice opposed to man's union with God, the exhortations to virtue and purity of heart and life! The Gospels supply most excellent material for Christian nurture in the discourses, miracles, and parables of Jesus. The "Sermon on the Mount" with its sublime beatitudes, and other discourses of Jesus, will forever remain a source of light and devotion to the attentive student. The narratives of the miracles are most suggestive of feelings of admiration and love and thanksgiving to God. In like manner the parables are an inexhaustible source of light and strength to any one who ponders on them. More instructive and inspiring still is our Lord's biography. Whether we contemplate Him in the manger at Bethlehem, in the workshop at Nazareth, in the synagogue in Galilee, in His triumphal entrance into Jerusalem, in the garden of Gethsemane, on the cross, or after His resurrection—wherever we behold Him, He is ever and always the perfect pattern "of the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness." And the more the character and life of Jesus are studied, and dwelt upon, the more they will be seen to exhibit, wonderfully combined in one person, "whatsoever things are honorable, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report;" the more they will appear to be in all points worthy of our contemplation, and the more they will inspire us to earnest imitation. In addition to this Exemplar of all perfection the New Testament furnishes character sketches of a large number of faithful disciples of Jesus. Have Paul, John, Peter, Martha, Mary, Timothy, Luke, Titus, the early Christians in Jerusalem, or Antioch, or Corinth, no message for the twentieth century? Indeed, they have; they supply excellent material for study and meditation; and if properly used they will promote a closer union of hearts, minds, and lives with the Almighty.

Let us glance for a moment at the Epistles. They were

written for the instruction of men like ourselves; to "meet the emergencies that arose in the planting and growth of the Churches; to lay the basis for a rational, spiritual life of faith in the living Jesus." They deal with all the essential elements, doctrinal and practical, of Christian life and activity. There is not an Epistle but which, if properly studied, will enrich experience and life. The New Testament closes with that mysterious book—Revelation. Many parts of it may appear mysterious and hard to understand; but it contains also much practical instruction. It surely may serve to bring Jesus, the exalted Redeemer, close to man in his life struggles, for the book makes it clear that a watchful eye is resting upon the affairs of men in this life. Revelation assures us that these sorrows, temptations, and trials are to end at last in complete victory, in everlasting peace and joy. Is this no message to strengthen, to encourage, to inspire the Christian in the battlefields of life?

Truly, one may look where he will in the pages of the sacred Book, from first to last, and everywhere he will find words of wisdom, of encouragement, of consolation, of inspiration, of life. A book of this character deserves the closest and most persistent searching and inquiry.

Lesson Outline:

The testimony of the ages.
The literary excellence of the Bible.
Importance of Bible study to a knowledge of literature and history.
Unique religious value.
Permanent religious value.

Bibliography:

Briggs, "The Study of Holy Scripture."
Lock, "The Bible in Christian Life."
Prothero, "The Psalms in Human Life."
Jordan, "Prophetic Ideas and Ideals."

Topics for Special Study:

1. The literary masterpieces of the Bible.
2. The bearing of prophetic teaching on modern social and political problems.

Topics for Class Discussion:

1. Reasons for studying the Bible.
2. Why is the Bible of so great religious value?
3. Ways in which the New Testament aids in the perfecting of character.

CHAPTER V

HOW STUDY THE BIBLE

1. Mere Reading is not Study. The transition from the *Why* to the *How* of Bible study is quite natural. The first point to be noted is, that mere reading of the Bible is not study of the Bible. There are undoubtedly those who imagine that there is a certain merit in the reading of a stated portion of the Bible every morning and evening, as there are those who seem to feel that "saying their prayers" is an act of merit. Thomas Fuller apparently has in mind this mechanical reading when he writes: "Lord, I discover an arrant laziness in my soul. For when I am to read a chapter in the Bible, before I begin I look where it endeth. And if it endeth not on the same side I can not keep my hands from turning over the leaf to measure the length thereof on the other side; if it swells to many verses I begin to grudge. Surely my heart is not rightly affected." This kind of Bible reading, no matter how long continued, and no matter how much ground covered, nor how often covered, will never introduce the Christian to the riches of the sacred Book. To learn its lessons, to appropriate its truths, to feed with its message the hungry soul, one must give to its pages earnest study, diligent searching, persistent inquiry, tireless zeal. But, some one may ask, Granting that I must study the Scriptures earnestly and diligently, how am I to go about it so as to receive the greatest benefit? In answer to this inquiry this chapter will consider two essential factors in all proper and successful Bible study: (1) Methods of study; (2) The right spirit in Bible study.

2. The Literary Method of Bible Study. The comparatively recent discovery that the Bible contains sublime specimens of various forms of literature has given rise to what may be called the literary method of Bible study. The literary student is wide-awake to the literary form of Scripture; he recognizes the presence of literary masterpieces and studies them from the literary standpoint. Now it is unquestionably true that without proper regard for the literary form of the Scriptures the deeper significance of their teaching can not be understood. Unfortunately the devotional student has often overlooked this fact, and as a result, in many cases, has failed to understand the real significance of a passage. On the other hand, over-emphasis of the literary features may blind the eyes to the real purpose of the Book. After all, the Scriptures were not written and collected primarily as specimens of various forms of literature, but to record and interpret divine revelations; and it is readily seen that in the pursuit of a narrow literary method insufficient weight may be given to this primary purpose. However important it may be to estimate correctly the literary features of the Bible, the Christian can not be content with studying its writings as he would study history, or poetry, or other forms of literature outside of the Bible.

3. Devotional Bible Study. The primary purpose of the Biblical writers was to record and interpret the manifold revelations of God as seen and apprehended by them. This being the case, the primary purpose of the Bible study should be to understand these revelations of God, to know Him, His nature, character, and will, and by becoming acquainted with these to bring God nearer to us and us nearer to Him in obedience and love. It follows that the study of the Bible as a book of devotion is the only adequate kind of Bible study.

a. Dangers of Unsystematic Bible Study. The purpose of the devotional student of the Bible is to discover what is the message of the portion studied, be it great or small, to his

own soul and life. This to some seems exceedingly simple. Many open the Bible and read or study wherever attention is accidentally arrested, sometimes the passage the eye lights upon, sometimes the spot touched by the finger. John Ruskin aptly describes the manner in which many Christian people seek to acquire a knowledge of the Bible. The way they read their Bibles, he says, is "just like the way the old monks thought that hedgehogs ate grapes. They rolled themselves, it was said, over and over where the grapes lay on the ground. What fruit stuck to their spines they carried off and ate. So," he continues, "your hedgehoggy readers roll themselves over and over their Bibles, and whatever texts first stick to their spines they carry off and feed on. But," he adds, "you can only get the skins of the texts that way; if you want their juice you must press them in cluster."

Some good may undoubtedly be derived even in this haphazard way. Even the most simple may open the Book almost anywhere and find encouragement, or inspiration, or consolation, or whatever else he may need; and this fact is a strong evidence of the presence of a divine element in the Book. But surely it is not wise, yea, it is not right, to feed on crumbs when there is provided a constant, inexhaustible feast. Moreover, this superficial, though devout, study is fraught with grave dangers. It gives to the reader not only a fragmentary conception of the truth; it may give him an entirely false idea of the teaching of a passage. A text wrested from its connection may be made to mean almost anything.

If the Bible is a book written many centuries ago by men of an entirely different race, of different modes of thinking and expression, the greater part in a language foreign to any of the languages with which we are ordinarily familiar, dealing with the profoundest subjects with which the human mind can grapple, with subjects that directly or indirectly are related to all kinds of knowledge; if the Bible is such a book, who can expect to understand its teaching after a superficial reading or study? One of the first require-

ments to assure results in devotional Bible study is the adoption of a proper method of study. Of various methods suggested there are, apart from the method pursued in Sunday-school, with which the reader is familiar, especially three that enjoy more or less popularity: *The Topical Method; The Study by Characters; The Study by Books.*

b. The Topical Method of Bible Study. In following out the topical method of Bible study the student becomes interested in certain great subjects, such as faith, love, salvation, heaven, and others. He decides to discover all the Bible has to say on these topics; so he takes the Bible, a concordance, or some help especially prepared for the purpose, and, going through the entire Bible, reads and studies every passage containing the term.

That this method, if properly used, may prove helpful can not be denied; that very often it is a source of serious error is equally true. Most of the false theologies and false ethics of modern times are traceable to this method of Bible study. And this is easily explained, for, in the first place, such study is only fragmentary. Love, or faith, or any other Bible truth, may be taught or elaborated in a passage which does not contain these terms; yet this method makes it possible to carry on the study with entire disregard of such passages. Moreover, the topical method tends to wrest separate statements from their contexts, and thus to obscure or even pervert their meaning. Not one great doctrine of the Christian Church has escaped perversion on the part of those who failed to exercise the proper caution while pursuing the topical study, and thus discredit has been brought upon the Bible and Christianity. Indeed, the topical method is a snare to the unwary. To follow it successfully, one must already have mastered the Bible as a whole, so as not to pervert the meaning of the separate parts.

c. The Study of the Bible by Characters. A better method than the preceding, and one quite popular, is the study of

the Bible by characters. The great personalities of the Bible, such as Abraham, Joseph, Samuel, David, Jesus, John, Paul, and others, are selected, and their lives and characters are made the subjects of study. Thus the student becomes acquainted with their excellencies, their weaknesses, their victories, their defeats, their temptations and struggles, in fact with everything that touched their lives and helped to mold their characters. These were men like ourselves, with the same natures, the same temptations and struggles, and a study of their lives and experiences may be an inspiration or warning, as the case may be, to the one who pursues the study.

This is a perfectly legitimate method of Bible study. Moreover, it is a very simple method, which every one, even the least experienced, may pursue to his unspeakable advantage. In addition, it is a method that readily yields results, for every single character teaches one or more practical lessons, and the farther the student advances the greater and the more precious the truths learned; and in the end, if the study is pursued with patience and perseverance, if the lessons learned are consistently applied by the student to his own life and character, the result will manifest itself in a godly, Christlike life and character.

d. The Study of the Bible by Books. A third method, and the one almost universally recognized as the most satisfactory in the end, is the study of the Bible by books. Attention has been called several times to the importance of looking at the context of a passage of Scripture in order to determine its exact meaning. But what is the context? Is it only a sentence before or after the particular passage the student is considering? Sometimes that may be all. In other cases it may be a chapter or two; in still others it is the whole book; indeed, one can never be sure that he is getting the precise point of view and real meaning of any one sentence of any book unless he takes it as a part of the whole and with reference to the general line of thought and practical design of the author. It is this kind of study, and this kind

of study alone, that will save the reader from misunderstanding and misinterpretation. Moreover, it is well to bear in mind that, while the Bible is in a real sense one book, one plan, one spirit, one purpose running throughout the whole, in another sense it is a library consisting of many books. These were written and published separately, each with its own meaning and purpose. Since, then, each of the sacred books has its own aim and value, it goes almost without saying that the Bible student should try to get the practical impression that each of them is designed to make. For instance, each of the Gospels presents certain aspects of the life, character, and work of Jesus. If, now, the student finds out how each of the Gospels portrays Him, and then blends them all together in loving faith, in reverence, and in humble desire to live like Him, he has made the most beautiful harmony of the Gospels ever attempted.

And so it is with other parts of the Bible. We need the practical inspiration which each particular book can give. If this method of study is pursued intelligently, it will prevent misunderstanding and misinterpretation, it will furnish a knowledge of the practical significance of each part, and in the end will give the most comprehensive vision of the whole. Only on the basis of such study can the study by characters or by topics be pursued to the best advantage.

4. **The Critical Method of Bible Study.** In the method of study described in the preceding paragraph the student has constantly in view the message which the book studied may have to his own soul and life. But from what has been said it must have become clear that much preparatory work must be done before the student can expect to understand adequately the message of the book. Now, there is another method of study, which places much emphasis upon these preliminary labors. For want of a better name it may be called the critical method. It concerns itself with the text, to determine its form as it left the hand of the author, and seeks to set in a clear light the origin and literary history of the

book. When was it written? where? by whom? to whom? for what purpose? No sane person can doubt that answers to these and similar questions are essential if the message of the book is to be understood. As long as this method of study retains its proper place as a means to an end it is not only legitimate, but necessary. However, it becomes inadequate and disastrous when, through overemphasis of preliminary questions, the true aim of Bible study is lost sight of.

5. Suggestions for the Study of the Bible by Books. A few words may be added as to the simplest manner in which the ordinary Bible student can study the Bible by books. For the beginner it would be best to select a simple book; for example, in the Old Testament, the Book of Amos; in the New Testament, one of the Gospels. Having made the selection, the student should acquire, first of all, a fairly well defined general notion of its contents. This he can do by reading the book carefully, if possible at one sitting, and reading it thus several times. It is an exceedingly difficult matter to understand any book if it is read always only in fragments. After reading the book intelligently, he should attempt to write down the general impressions of its theme and substance. This should be followed by another reading or two, on the basis of which the impressions written down should be corrected. This process should be continued until the student has secured a fair knowledge of the book as a whole. But this is only the first step. The student should next get an idea of the logical arrangement of the contents of the book. If he finds it difficult to work this out for himself, he may consult an analysis of the book as found in some Bible help. With this analysis in mind, he should now proceed to master the book section by section by a careful study of each word and sentence. While it is advisable to use in this study commentaries and other helps, the student must never assign first place to them; the Bible must be the basis of study, other books should be used only as means to a

better understanding of the message of the Biblical writer. To best impress the results upon his own mind, he may do well to write them down. Having proceeded thus far, he may cast aside the analysis used and make one of his own, based upon the contents as he interprets them.

The successive steps will enable the student to view and estimate the book as a whole. Now he is prepared to take up the topical study of that one book. Naturally the topics will vary with different books, but certain topics should be studied in connection with all books. Going through the book, the student should collect all materials touching upon the author, the time and place of writing, the purpose, the persons addressed, the conditions of the writer and of the first readers, the several religious truths expressed, and many more. Every student pursuing his studies along the lines suggested will soon be prepared to make his own list of topics. After doing all this the student will become conscious of having mastered the book, that he understands its teaching, and that he can apply it to his own life and conduct so as to receive new impulses and inspiration to live a Christ-like life. Now he is ready to turn to another book, until he has mastered the whole Bible. While going thus from book to book he may very profitably turn from time to time to a book already mastered and read small portions suitable to the needs of a particular time.

This kind of study requires time, patience, and industry; but it is the only kind that in the end will enable the student to determine for himself what the Bible actually says, and will give to him a comprehensive insight into the mysteries of God as revealed in the Bible. And after all, fifteen minutes or half an hour a day, if set aside regularly, will accomplish great things. In closing this section the admission may be made that there is, perhaps, no clear-cut method of Bible study that will apply to all students and all occasions. Every student has peculiarities of his own, and naturally he will adopt a method and introduce modifications which seem to

him best adapted to achieve the results he desires. Nevertheless, whatever the individual peculiarities, there are certain fundamental principles which underlie all successful Bible study, and to these attention is called in the preceding paragraphs.

6. The Attitude of Mind and Heart in Bible Study. A second essential factor in Bible study is the proper attitude of mind and heart, the spirit in which the student approaches the Bible. In the first place, he who seeks to obtain the best results must approach the Bible in the spirit of a *learner;* he must be humble and childlike, ready to receive instruction. Again, he must approach the Bible in a *spirit of open-mindedness,* willing to receive the truth, though that truth may be contrary to the notions cherished before thorough Bible study was entered upon. Moreover, he must enter upon the study in a *spirit of expectancy.* The investigation of any subject may be approached in one of three attitudes of mind as to results. There may be a spirit of uncertainty and indifference, or a spirit of non-expectancy, or a spirit of expectancy, of assurance that the efforts will not be in vain. Only the student who approaches the study of the Bible in the last-mentioned attitude and spirit will see the most helpful results. There must also be a spirit of *determination and perseverance.* If the student is turned aside by any difficulty, be it great or small, the sweet, full-grown fruit can not be his. The richest truths of the Bible are not found by one who is easily tired out. Bible study demands unwearied perseverance. Another essential requisite is a *spirit of prayerfulness.* There are sayings in the Bible hard to be understood, for the natural man receiveth not the things of God; but the Spirit searcheth all things, even the deep things of God. This is the Spirit that is to lead into all truth. Bible study can never be what it should be unless the student approaches the Sacred Book in a spirit of prayer for the illumination of his heart and mind by the Spirit of truth. Once more, there must be a spirit of *responsiveness.* By this I mean more than willing-

ness to be taught. Sooner or later the student finds that the truths he discovers impose upon him certain duties that appeal to his conscience. Now, scientific truth is most readily mastered by practical application. The same is true of moral and religious truth. He that willeth to do is the one that will learn the most. Whenever a truth is found in the Bible it should be accepted not merely as an abstract truth, but as a part of the inner life to find expression in conduct.

In this wise the present writer would answer the inquiry, how to study the Bible, and he is convinced that if the student brings to the Bible the right method and the right spirit, God will say to him, in the words of the four and twenty elders before the throne of God, "Thou art worthy to take the Book and open the seals thereof."

Lesson Outline:

The meaning of study.
The study of the Bible as literature.
The devotional study of the Bible.
Dangers of unsystematic study.
Methods of Bible Study: Topical; biographical; by books.
The critical method.
The right spirit in Bible study.

Bibliography:

Moulton, "The Literary Study of the Bible."
Trumbull, "Hints on Bible Study."
Sell, "Bible Study by Books."
Smyth, "How to Read the Bible."

Topics for Special Study:

1. The study of some one book according to the suggestions of paragraph five.
2. The historical criticism.

Topics for Class Discussion:

1. What are the dangers of poor methods of Bible study?
2. Discuss the advantages and disadvantages of topical study.
3. The best general method of Bible study.
4. Elements of the right spirit in Bible study.

PART II

THE OLD TESTAMENT

By F. C. Eiselen

CHAPTER VI

THE HISTORICAL PORTIONS OF THE PENTATEUCH AND JOSHUA

1. The Pentateuch. The first five books of the Old Testament were called by the early Jewish rabbis, "The five-fifths of the Law." Following this custom, early Christian writers, beginning with Tertullian and Origen, called the collection consisting of the five books "Pentateuch," which means "the five-book treatise." Modern scholars add to the five books in the Pentateuch the Book of Joshua, because "its contents, and still more, its literary structure, show that it is intimately connected with the Pentateuch and describes the final stage in the history of the *Origines* of the Hebrew nation." Hence it has become customary to speak of the first six books of the Bible—Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, Deuteronomy, and Joshua—as the "Hexateuch," that is, "the six-book treatise."

The historical portions of the Hexateuch cover the period beginning with the creation of the world and ending with the settlement of Israel in Canaan. This period may be divided into three epochs: (1) The beginning of all things, Gen. 1:1—11:9; (2) the Hebrew patriarchs, Gen. 11:10—50:26; (3) the organization of Israel as a nation and its settlement in Canaan, the historical sections of Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, Deuteronomy, and the Book of Joshua.

The Pentateuch contains material taken from different sources which the author had before him in written form. These documents probably did not reach their final form until some time subsequent to Moses, but all of them contained

ancient material, much of it going back to the time of Moses, some of it even to pre-Mosaic days. Hence it is quite proper to associate the name of Moses with the Pentateuch, because, first, he was the author and originator of the movement and impulse which culminated in the Pentateuch; and second, the historical, religious, and ethical development reflected in the Pentateuch progressed in the spirit of Moses and along the lines laid down by him.

The chronology of the Old Testament offers very perplexing problems, especially with reference to the period covered in this chapter. Archbishop Ussher placed creation at 4004 B. C., but modern research has compelled us to push this date back, though it may be uncertain just how far. Not until the age of Abraham does Bible chronology reach any sort of firm foundation. If Abraham was the contemporary of Hammurabi, the great king of Babylon, as is suggested in Gen. 14:1, his date is approximately 2000 B. C.; the descent into Egypt may have taken place in the seventeenth century, and the most probable date of the Exodus is about 1225 B. C.

a. Contents of the Book of Genesis. The name *Genesis,* meaning "origin" or "generation," is derived from the Septuagint translation; in the Hebrew Bible the book is designated by its first word, translated in the English Bible, "In the beginning." Two main divisions may be recognized: I. The beginning of all things (1:1—11:9); II. The stories of the Patriarchs (11:10—50:26).

The first division falls naturally into the following sections:

1. The creation of all things (1:1—2:25).
2. The beginning of sin (3:1-24).
3. Early growth and corruption (4:1—6:8).
   (1) The first murder (4:1-16).
   (2) The earliest civilization (4:17-24).
   (3) The line of Seth (4:25—5:32).
   (4) The apostate sons of God (6:1-8).

4. Noah and his times (6:9—9:29).
   (1) The flood (6:9—9:17).
   (2) Noah's prophecy (9:18-29).
5. The origin of the peoples (10:1—11:9).
   (1) The gradual dispersion (10:1-32).
   (2) The confusion of tongues (11:1-9).

It is more difficult to arrange the remaining chapters of Genesis according to a similar system, but its contents may be briefly indicated. The Hebrews possess many characteristics which are common to the group of nations known as the Semitic race. The racial relations of the Hebrews are briefly indicated in Gen. 11:10-26, which traces the genealogy of Shem down to Abraham, whose migration from Southern Babylonia to Canaan marks the first beginnings of the Hebrew people. The remaining portion of the book consists of narratives centering around the three great patriarchs, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and of Joseph, the favorite son of Jacob. The lives of these are narrated with considerable fullness down to the descent into Egypt, with an account of which Genesis closes. The connecting bond in this section is the promise to Abraham and the covenant based upon it (12:1-3), the unfolding of which is exhibited in the histories of the patriarchs and the rise of the twelve tribes. The various steps in the development are connected, and the interest is concentrated by the use of the formula, "These are the generations of:" Shem, 11:10; Terah (Abraham), 11:27; Ishmael, 25:12; Isaac, 25:19; Esau, 36:1, 9; Jacob, 37:2.

b. Significance of Genesis. The permanent value of Genesis 1 to 11 lies in the religious teaching of the chapters. It is not in their knowledge of physical facts that the authors were elevated above their contemporaries, but in their knowledge of God's connection with these facts. What good would have resulted if these ancient writers had proposed new views of the universe which, though true, were foreign to the thinking of their contemporaries? They would have been looked

upon as madmen and fanatics; people would have mocked them and rejected all their teaching, both religious and scientific. No serious loss would come to men if they were left a while longer in ignorance about matters of science; but serious loss would come to them by continuing in their lower religious and ethical beliefs and practices. The ancient inspired teachers sought to rectify the latter, and they used current scientific notions as vehicles for the teaching of high and lofty religious and ethical truths. Scientifically, therefore, these chapters give the best that the age of the writers offered; religiously they give something that the age as a whole did not possess; something that came to the writers as a result of their intimate fellowship with God; and in this divine element lie the significance and permanent value of the narratives.

The one supreme lesson taught throughout the entire section is, "In the beginning God." The more important lessons of the separate narratives are briefly summarized by Driver as follows: "The narrative of creation sets forth, in a series of dignified and impressive pictures, the sovereignty of God; His priority to and separation from all finite, material nature; His purpose to constitute an ordered cosmos, and gradually to adapt the earth to become the habitation of living beings; and His endowment of man with the peculiar, unique possession of self-conscious reason, in virtue of which he became capable of intellectual and moral life and is even able to know and hold communion with his Maker. In chapters 2 and 3 we read, though again not in a historical, but in a pictorial and symbolic form, how man was once innocent, how he became conscious of a moral law; and how temptation fell upon him and he broke it. The fall of man, the great and terrible truth, which history not less than individual experience only too vividly teaches each one of us, is thus impressively set before us. Man, however, though punished by God, is not forsaken by Him, nor left in his long conflict with evil without hope of victory. In chapter 4 the increas-

ing power of sin, and the fatal consequences to which, if unchecked, it may lead, is vividly portrayed in the tragic figure of Cain. The spirit of vindictiveness and the brutal triumph in the power of the sword is personified in Lamech. In the narrative of the flood God's wrath against sin and the divine prerogative of mercy are alike exemplified: Noah is a standing illustration of the truth that 'righteousness delivereth from death,' and God's dealings with him after the flood form a striking declaration of the purposes of grace and good-will with which God regards mankind. The narrative of the tower of Babel emphasizes Jehovah's supremacy in the world, and teaches how the self-exaltation of man is checked by God."

The permanent religious significance of the patriarchal narratives is brought out in chapter IV. Here a few words may be added concerning their historical value. The later history of Israel presupposes a nomadic stage in the development of the people such as is described in Genesis 12—50, and there seems good reason for believing that the narratives furnish a truthful picture of the general conditions in the patriarchal period. It follows, therefore, that even as historical documents the partiarchal narratives are of inestimable value.

c. The Historical Portions of the Books from Exodus to Deuteronomy. The closing chapters of Genesis record how the Hebrew nomads, after living in Canaan for some generations, were driven by famine into Egypt, where the Pharaoh settled them in Goshen, in the eastern portion of the Nile Delta. There they remained in practical seclusion for many generations, retaining very largely their customs and beliefs. This period is passed over very briefly in the Book of Exodus, "And the children of Israel were fruitful, and increased abundantly, and multiplied, and waxed exceeding mighty; and the land was filled with them." (Ex. 1:7.) In the course of time a new dynasty arose in Egypt, under which began a period of oppression, from which the Hebrews were delivered under the leadership of Moses (about 1225 B. C.). Exodus 1:1—12:36 portrays the closing years of the stay

in Egypt: the oppression, the history of Moses, his mission to Pharaoh, and the plagues sent upon Egypt for the purpose of securing the release of the Hebrews. Exodus 12:37—18:27 contains a record of the departure from Egypt, the overthrow of the Egyptians, and the march of the Israelites until they reached Mount Sinai. The rest of the Book of Exodus records some of the events before Mount Sinai, but the greater part is devoted to an account of the giving of the Law. The Book of Leviticus belongs almost exclusively to the legal literature, as also considerable portions of Numbers and Deuteronomy.

The Book of Numbers carries the account of Israel's journeyings to the settlement in the country east of the Jordan. Chapters 1—4 contain chiefly the census taken of the people who came out of Egypt. Chapters 11—19 record the wanderings of Israel: the survey of Canaan, the refusal to enter the land, the march back to the wilderness, and various rebellions. The period covered extends from the second to the beginning of the fortieth year. Chapters 20—24 relate the events of the first ten months of the fortieth year: the march around Edom, the death of Aaron, the conquest of the land of the Amorites and of Bashan, and the episode of Balaam. Chapters 25—36 contain much legal material; the historical portions describe the sin of Baal-peor (25), the second census (26), the slaughter of the Midianites (31), the settlement east of the Jordan (32-35). The Book of Deuteronomy consists mainly of addresses to the people. The first of these (1:1—4:49) contains a rehearsal of the history from Mount Horeb (Sinai) to the Jordan. Chapters 31—34 deal with the closing days of Moses: his charge to Joshua (31), the Song of Moses (32), the Blessing of Moses (33), the death of Moses (34).

2. The Book of Joshua. The Book of Joshua takes up the narrative near the point where Numbers drops it, the only intervening event of importance being the death of Moses. Joshua is, therefore, the direct continuation of the

historical portions of the Pentateuch. Its contents may be briefly indicated as follows: I. Chapters 1—12, the conquest of Canaan; II. Chapters 13—22, the division of the land among the tribes; III. Chapters 23 and 24, Joshua's farewell addresses and an account of the death of Joshua and Eleazar. The principal events recorded in the first division are: the preparations for the conquest (1); the sending of the spies to Jericho, and their reception by Rahab (2); the crossing of the Jordan (3, 4); the encampment at Gilgal (5); the fall of Jericho (6); the trespass of Achan, and the attacks upon Ai (7, 8); the treaty with the Gibeonites (9); the conquest of southern Canaan (10); the conquest of northern Canaan and other kings (11, 12). The second division (13—22) gives a detailed account of the division of the land among the tribes, and yet their exact location can not be definitely established. On the one hand, the boundaries laid down are ideal, and in many cases the tribes were not able to conquer the whole territory allotted to them; on the other, many of the localities named are not yet identified. Generally speaking, the southern portion of the central range was occupied by Judah; still farther to the south, extending out into the desert, was Simeon. Ephraim and part of Manasseh were the dominant power in the center; between Ephraim and Judah the small but vigorous tribe of Benjamin, little more than a branch of Ephraim, found a home. The group of northern tribes consisted of Issachar, Zebulon, Naphtali, and Asher. Issachar occupied the rich plain of Esdraelon, Zebulon the rolling hills north of the plain, Napthali the narrow strip along the Jordan, from the plain of Esdraelon to the Lebanon. West of the Lebanon, between it and Phœnicia, Asher settled, in the district known at a later time as Upper Galilee. Dan settled originally on the southwestern slope of Mount Ephraim, but the pressure of the populous tribe of Ephraim, the Amorites, and the Philistines compelled the Danites to seek a new home elsewhere. This was found in a retired spot at the foot of Mount Hermon, at Laish, a

Phœnician colony, whose name was changed to Dan. Two tribes, Gad and Reuben, and a part of a third, Manasseh, settled east of the Jordan. The tribe of Levi received no fixed portion.

A close study of the Book of Joshua reveals the fact that the story of the conquest is written from two distinct viewpoints: the one reflected in chapters 1—12, the other in brief notes scattered through the rest of the book. By piecing together the two accounts we can construct a fairly complete narrative of the conquest. After the death of Moses, Israel accepted Joshua as his successor, and continued on the path of conquest. The Jordan was crossed, and Jericho, the city of the palm trees, won. Gibeon, panic-stricken, made terms with the invaders. Israel, united under Joshua, won a great victory over a southern confederacy at Beth-horon. Elated by these repeated successes, Judah and Simeon broke loose from the main body and turned southward to take possession of the southern portion of the central range. Joshua, at the head of the strong house of Joseph, and followed by the tribes which afterward settled in the north, burst across the Plain of Esdraelon and defeated a northern confederacy at the waters of Merom. The Canaanites, however, after bending before the storm, recovered courage, retained for some time possession of the rich plain, and compelled the Israelites to keep to the hills.

When the initial impetus of the conquest lost its force, the Canaanites were still masters of the land. Not all at once, nor by the sword alone, did the Hebrews come into possession of their heritage. Peaceful means, such as intermarriage with natives and covenants or treaties with friendly neighbors, played an important rôle in the final conquest of Palestine. In some sections Canaanitish, in others Israelitish, influence was the stronger. The question was, Which would conquer in the end? The Canaanites, with their superior civilization, enjoyed a great advantage, and the newcomers learned of them agriculture and the few simple arts practiced in those

days. But the problem was not only political and social, it was religious as well. Would the Israelites accept the religion of their teachers? If they did, the lessons of the past would have to be repeated, or true religion would be lost to the world. The crisis was serious; the more so because the religious and moral conceptions of the vast mass of the Israelites were still low and, therefore, the transition to the Canaanitish ideas was not very difficult. That Canaan did not triumph was due to the providentially raised-up leaders, who emphasized and re-emphasized again and again the necessity of maintaining a strong and living faith in Jehovah, the God of Israel.

Lesson Outline:

The Pentateuch; meaning of the word; the Hexateuch; period of history covered.
Contents and significance of Genesis.
The history of Genesis, Exodus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy.
The Book of Joshua.

Bibliography:

Ottley, "A Short History of the Hebrews."
Kent, "History of the Hebrew People."
Hastings, "One Volume Dictionary."
Commentaries: "Genesis," Bennett; "Exodus," Bennett; "Leviticus and Numbers," Genung; "Deuteronomy and Joshua," Robinson.

Topics for Special Study:

1. Institutions and religious ideas of patriarchal times.
2. The earliest history of Palestine.
3. Canaanitish influence upon Israel.

Topics for Class Discussion:

1. What designation may best be used for the books treated in this chapter?
2. The contents of Genesis.
3. The real significance of Genesis.
4. What are the principal historical events recorded in Exodus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy?
5. The historical events of the Book of Joshua.
6. The location of the tribes.
7. The progress and methods of the conquest.

CHAPTER VII

THE LEGAL PORTIONS OF THE PENTATEUCH

1. The Origin of the Legal System of the Hebrews. Practically the entire legal system of the Hebrews is embodied in the Books of Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy; outside of the Pentateuch the most important piece of legislation is Ezekiel 40—48. Israel's system of laws, in all its aspects—ceremonial, moral, civil, and criminal—undoubtedly had its beginning with Moses. He proclaimed Jehovah to be the one God of Israel, and Israel to be the peculiar people of Jehovah. In order to perpetuate the new order, he must regulate the relation of the Israelites to their God, to one another, and to the nation as a whole. This brought about the creation or adaptation of a ceremonial system, the giving of certain moral commands, and the formulation of judicial precepts, which might govern the life and conduct of the people. The Mosaic origin of the legal system of the Hebrews is almost universally admitted. Says Wellhausen: "The priests derived their *tôrāh* [the Hebrew word meaning law] from Moses: they claimed only to preserve and guard what Moses had left. . . . From the historical tradition it is certain that Moses was the founder of the *tôrāh*." So also Montefiore: "Moses . . . was unquestionably the founder of that oral teaching, or *tôrāh*, which preceded and became the basis of the codes of the Pentateuch." On the other hand, it seems equally clear that the foundation laid by Moses was built upon by later generations, in the spirit of Moses, to meet the needs of a more complex and complicated state of society. This movement, which con-

tinued through centuries, resulted finally in the legislative system embodied in the Pentateuch.

2. The Several Law Codes and their Dates. It is possible to distinguish between six different collections of laws in the Old Testament. Five of these are in the Pentateuch; the other forms the closing chapters of the Book of Ezekiel (chapters 40—48). The approximate dates when the Pentateuchal codes are thought to have reached their completed form are commonly given as follows:

(1) The Decalogue, in some form—the days of Moses.
(2) The Book of Covenant—the period of the Judges or the early monarchy.
(3) The Deuteronomic Code—the seventh century, preceding the reform movement under Josiah.
(4) The Holiness Code—the early years of the exile.
(5) The Priestly Code—the closing years of the exile and the post-exilic period.

(Between 4 and 5, about 570, would come the Code of Ezekiel.)

But while these are the periods in which the several codes are thought to have reached their completed literary form, it is universally admitted that all of them contain laws much earlier than the codes as a whole, some of them as early as the time of Moses; and some of the more extensive codes are thought to embody entire collections made at an earlier time.

The entire system in its present form is known among Jews and Christians as the Law of Moses. If this system reached its final form by the steps just indicated, Moses can not be considered the author of all the separate laws contained in the various codes; and yet "Law of Moses" is not a misnomer; for it was Moses who called the Hebrew nation into being; it was he who inspired his contemporaries and later generations with lofty moral and religious ideals;

it was he who laid the foundation of the Hebrew legal system in all its various aspects. The work of the later prophets, priests, and lawgivers was carried on in the spirit of Moses and along the lines laid down by him as the first great prophet of Israel, who "talked with God face to face."

a. The Decalogue. The code commonly called the Decalogue appears in two recensions, differing in details, in Exodus 20 and Deuteronomy 5. In both cases some of the commandments are expanded by certain hortatory additions. The legal requirements proper are as follows:

(1) Thou shalt have no other gods before Me.
(2) Thou shalt not make unto thee a graven image.
(3) Thou shalt not take the name of Jehovah, thy God, in vain.
(4) Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy.
(5) Honor thy father and thy mother.
(6) Thou shalt do no murder.
(7) Thou shalt not commit adultery.
(8) Thou shalt not steal.
(9) Thou shalt not bear false witness.
(10) Thou shalt not covet thy neighbor's wife.

These ten commandments may be divided into two tables of five precepts each, the first five regulating the attitude of the people toward Jehovah and towards parents, who to children stand in the place of God. The other five, the attitude toward their fellow Israelites.

Concerning the character and permanent significance of this code, it has been well said: "The marvelous perfection of this summary of moral law, its intrinsic excellency, the universal applicability of its several precepts, and their abiding and unchanging nature, place these commandments in advance of anything to be found elsewhere in the annals of human legislation. They are a summary of divine revelation so absolutely fundamental and comprehensive that on them hang all the law and the prophets. They are grounded

in the very nature of man as a moral being, and take due cognizance of his essential relations to God on the one hand, and to his fellows on the other."

b. The Book of the Covenant. It is unthinkable that Moses settled all disputes brought before him simply by appealing to the Decalogue. He must have made his decisions more specific. That at least some of these decisions were written down for the guidance of future generations seems quite probable. The Book of the Covenant appears to be a collection of such decisions somewhat expanded and modified to meet the needs of the people after the settlement in Canaan.

The Book of Covenant extends from Exodus 20:22—23:19. Its laws deal with a variety of subjects, and it requires considerable adjustment to make a systematic arrangement possible. Originally the whole book may have been arranged on the principle of the Decalogue, in the sense that it contained ten separate decalogues, each containing two groups of five laws. Corresponding to the two tables, the Book of the Covenant may be divided into two groups of laws, each consisting of five decalogues: (1) Judgments dealing with civil and criminal cases; (2) Religious and humane laws. The five decalogues of the first group are not difficult to reconstruct; of the second group only four exist, though traces of the fifth appear. The collection of Judgments deals with the following subjects: (1) The rights of slaves (21:2-11); (2) Assaults (21:12-27); (3) Laws regarding domestic animals (21:28-36; 23:1, 4); (4) Responsibility for property (22:5-15); (5) Social Purity (22:16-20). The Religious and Humane Laws deal with (1) Kindness (22:2, 3, 6, 7, 21-27; 23:4, 5); (2) Justice (23:1-3, 6-8); (3) Duties to God (20:23-26; 22:28-31); (4) Sacred Seasons (23:10-19).

c. The Deuteronomic Code. The laws of Deuteronomy do not represent a break with Israel's earlier legislation, but rather an extension and development in the spirit of the eighth-century prophets. Three-fourths of the laws in the earlier codes are reproduced, in some form, in Deuteronomy.

The omission of the others is easily accounted for by the purpose of the new code. It was intended for popular use, while the omitted laws were primarily for the guidance of the judges. The reasons for the alterations of more ancient laws, and the addition of new ones, are to be traced to the change in political, social and religious conditions, and to the teaching of the eighth-century prophets. The spirit of Deuteronomy is prophetic. Service is ever placed above sacrifice. To love and to serve Jehovah and one's fellows with all the heart and soul is its supreme demand. The detailed laws are presented simply as means by which this love may find expression.

In its present form the Book of Deuteronomy consists aside from the introductory historical section (1—4) and the farewell speeches, exhortations, and blessings (27—34), of several rather loosely defined groups of laws: 1. The prophetic decalogue, followed by a series of exhortations based chiefly on the first command (5—11). 2. Ceremonial and religious laws (12:1—17:7). 3. Appointment and duties of the officials in the divinely ruled commonwealth—judges, kings, priests, and prophets (17:8—18:22). 4. Criminal laws (19:1-21—21:1-9). 5. Military laws to be observed in case of war (20:1-20; 21:10-14). 6. A miscellaneous collection of civil, criminal, humane, and religious laws, many of which are closely related to those in the other groups (21:15—25:19). 7. Presentation of the firstborn and the triennial tithe (26:1-19).

d. The Law of Holiness. The so-called Law of Holiness is contained in Leviticus 17 to 26. The code derives its modern name from the fact that its central idea is holiness, both moral and ceremonial. "Ye shall obey My commands and do them: I am Jehovah. And ye shall not profane My holy name; but I will be treated as holy among the Israelites. I am Jehovah, who maketh you holy, who brought you out of the land of Egypt to be your God: I am Jehovah." (Lev. 22:31-33.)

The Law of Holiness deals with a variety of topics. It is noteworthy, however, that it lays much less stress upon civil and criminal legislation than upon moral and ceremonial requirements. Some of the more important subjects are: The slaughter of animals and sacrifice (17); unchastity and Moloch worship (18); the religious and moral behavior of the Israelites (19); penalties enjoined for Moloch worship, unlawful marriage, and other offenses (20); regulations touching priests and offerings (21, 22); the sacred seasons (23); the lights of the sanctuary, the showbread, the blasphemer and his punishment (24); the Sabbatic year and the year of jubilee (25). The code closes with a hortatory address, emphasizing the fundamental duty of loyalty to Jehovah and His commands (26). In Leviticus 19:18, "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself," the Old Testament legislation reaches its noblest expression.

e. The Priestly Code. The so-called Priestly Code is found chiefly in Exodus, Leviticus, and Numbers. The underlying thought of the code is that Israel is called to be a holy people, sanctified by the presence of Jehovah in its midst. The nation is treated as a Church living only for the service of God, and the whole legislation is intended to maintain the proper relation between Jehovah and Israel, or, if it should be broken in any way, to restore it. This is also the aim of the other codes, but the priestly code differs from them in its marked emphasis upon the external forms and ceremonial practices of religion. The following brief outline will suggest the characteristic requirements of the code:

The law of circumcision (Gen. 17).

The law of the Passover (Ex. 12).

The tabernacle and its furniture; the dress and consecration of the priests; the law of the daily burnt offering, etc. (Ex. 25—31; 35—40.

The ritual of various sacrifices (Lev. 1:1—6:7).

Regulations relating to the priests, their dress, perquisites, etc. (Lev. 6:8—10:20).

Laws of purification and atonement (Lev. 11—16; Num. 5:1-4; 19.

The commendation of tithes and vows (Lev. 27; Num. 30).

Law of Nazarites (Num. 6).

Duties, revenues, distribution of the tithes appointed for priests and Levites (Num. 18); concerning Levitical cities (Num. 35:1-8).

Miscellaneous laws, some supplementary, some intended to harmonize various passages in the completed code, some dealing with civil matters; for example, the law of inheritance for daughters (Num. 27:1-11); the distribution of spoil taken in war (Num. 31:21-30); the law relating to homicide, and the appointment of the cities of refuge. (Num. 35:9-34).

As long as the religious leaders retained the prophetic spirit and moral fervor, this legal system, with all its emphasis on form, might serve as a means of religious education. It might help to "develop and deepen the sense of sin and to awaken in devout souls religious affections: trust, devotion, self-surrender, thankful love, the longing for divine grace." On the other hand, it would stand as a constant danger to spiritual religion. How easy it would be to be satisfied with a merely external standard of religion, to drift into a spirit of formalism, to confuse ceremonial holiness with moral purity! Unfortunately, later generations yielded to these dangers, and Judaism became a mere form, without power and life. It should be remembered, however, that in the Canon of Sacred Scripture the priestly code never had an independent existence. In the other collections of laws the broader duties of humanity, justice, and morality were insisted upon, and they were adapted to train a righteous and God-fearing nation. Hence, had the later Jews so desired, they might have known the things acceptable in the sight of God. Their failure was due not to neglectfulness on the part of the Divine Providence, but rather on the part of the Jewish community.

Lesson Outline:

The origin of the Hebrew legal system.
The several law codes; approximate dates, origin, and exposition of each.

Bibliography:

Kent, "Israel's Laws and Legal Precedents."
Terry, "Moses and the Prophets."
Hastings, "Bible Dictionary," Article Law.

Topics for Special Study:

1. The character and influence of the Decalogue.
2. The significance of the Deuteronomic Code.
3. The origin and development of the Ceremonial Law.

Topics for Class Discussion:

1. The significance of the term, "the Laws of Moses."
2. What is the Decalogue?
3. Explain the origin of the Book of the Covenant.
4. The spirit and content of the Deuteronomic Code.
5. The chief subjects of the Law of Holiness.
6. The distinctive features of the Priestly Code.

CHAPTER VIII

THE JUDGES AND THE UNITED MONARCHY

1. The Books of Judges and Ruth. The principal sources of information for the period of the Judges are the Books of Judges and Ruth and 1 Samuel 1—12. The Book of Judges consists of three well-defined portions: I. An Introduction, 1:1—3:6, presenting a view of conditions in Palestine at the time the period of the Judges begins; II. The History of the Judges, 3:7—16:31; III. An Appendix, 17—21, describing in detail two incidents belonging to this period: (1) The migration of the tribe of Dan (17, 18); (2) The outrage at Gibeah, and its consequences (19—21). The main part of the book consists of a series of older narratives, fitted into a framework by a later editor, and provided by him, where necessary, with introductory and concluding comments. The work of the editor appears most prominently in the ever-recurring formula, "The children of Israel did evil . . . He gave them into the hands of . . . They cried unto Jehovah . . . He raised up a deliverer." The older sources furnished him a knowledge of the events of history. The question arose in his mind, What is the explanation of the several ups and downs? Upon the basis of a powerful faith in Jehovah, the God of Israel, he supplies the answer in the formula quoted. The Book of Judges, therefore, is not simply a record of historical events, but a record *plus* an interpretation.

The Book of Ruth, which follows Judges in the English Bible, takes us to a period about a century before the time of David. It narrates how Elimelech of Bethlehem, his wife,

Naomi, and his two sons, Mahlon and Chilion, went to live in the land of Moab. The father dies, and the two sons marry Moabitish wives, Orpah and Ruth. After a while Mahlon and Chilion die, which leaves Naomi alone with her two daughters-in-law. She decides to return to Bethlehem, and Ruth insists on accompanying her (1). The remaining three chapters narrate how in Bethlehem Ruth makes the acquaintance of her kinsman Boaz, who in the end marries her. A son is born to them, Obed, the father of Jesse, who became the father of David. The narrative affords an idyllic glance of home life in Israel during the period of the Judges. The genealogy at the close suggests the probable purpose of the book. The Books of Samuel simply give the names of David's father and brothers; Ruth is intended to throw additional light on his ancestry.

2. The Judges and their Work. The Judges whose exploits the book records are thirteen in number, or, if Abimelech, who is not termed a Judge, be omitted, twelve: Othniel (3:7-11), Ehud (3:12-30), Shamgar (3:31), Barak and Deborah (4, 5), Gideon (6:1—8:32), Abimelech (8:33—9:57), Tola (10:1, 2), Jair (10:3-5), Jephthah (10:6—12:7), Ibzan (12:8-10), Elon (12:11, 12), Abdon (12:13-15), Samson (13—16). Shamgar, Tola, Jair, Ibzan, Elon, and Abdon, to whose exploits but little space is devoted, are sometimes called Minor Judges.

The term Judges as applied to the leaders of this period is in a sense a misnomer. Deliverer, or savior, the designation found in the most ancient narratives, describes their character and function more accurately. The men were brought to the front by the necessities of the age. A common danger, most frequently an invasion, threatened a town or tribe. In such a crisis some man of superior courage, energy, or wisdom arose and, rallying his tribesmen, led them to victory. Having demonstrated his ability to command and to act, he came to be regarded as the natural leader in crises of a similar character; but his authority was not derived from any

constitutional provision; it was for the time being delegated voluntarily by the people under the pressure of a common need. But in that turbulent and chaotic age differences frequently arose between individuals and even whole clans, and these, under the dominion of blood revenge, led at times to serious and disastrous consequences. This condition of affairs would make the need of an arbiter, whose wisdom and authority both parties would respect, strongly felt. In the nature of the case difficulties of this sort were frequently referred for settlement to these victorious champions. It is this fact which led later writers to call the local chieftains and deliverers by the name Judges.

a. Conditions in Palestine at the Beginning of the Period of the Judges. When the Israelites crossed the Jordan they found a thickly populated land. Agriculture was the principal occupation, and the inhabitants had attained a fairly high degree of civilization. Scattered throughout the land were strong cities, which only a short time before had been garrisoned by Egyptian soldiers, but Egypt had lost its hold, and the land was in political confusion. This state of things made it comparatively easy for the Hebrews to secure a foothold; it was a much more difficult task to take possession of the whole land. True, peaceful assimilation played an important rôle in the final conquest, but for the most part the Canaanites did not surrender without the most desperate struggles. Again and again they threatened the invaders; at other times Israel was attacked by outside nations that sought to take for themselves the more desirable districts of Palestine. The Book of Judges and the first twelve chapters of First Samuel describe the struggles leading to the final conquest.

b. The Several Crises during the Period of the Judges. The period of the Judges extends from the death of Joshua to the anointing of Saul as king over Israel. Its exact length can not be determined; from the available evidence it would seem that it was somewhat less than two centuries. During

these years six more or less serious crises arose, each of which called forth a deliverer. 1. The first of the Judges, Othniel, delivered Israel from a Mesopotamian king, whose name is not given, but who is called Cushan-rishathaim, which means, the Cushite of double wickedness. 2. Ehud, of the tribe of Benjamin, did his work in the south. Eglon, the king of Moab, had seized the city of Jericho, and imposed tribute upon the adjacent territory. Ehud treacherously slew the king and, summoning the Ephraimites, succeeded in driving the Moabites across the Jordan. 3. Meanwhile, the energy of the Israelites in the north was expended in seeking to conquer the land, but they were not altogether successful. In the course of time the natives prevailed against the newcomers, and the Israelites were threatened with complete subjugation. In this crisis Deborah, the prophetess, and Barak, of Kadesh Napthali, summoned the Israelitish forces to "come to the help of Jehovah against the mighty." The battle with the Canaanites was fought in the Plain of Esdraelon, and ended in a decisive victory for Israel. The power of the Canaanites was forever broken, and Central Palestine was thrown open to the immigrants. 4. Soon a new danger threatened, this time from the east. Midianites began to cross the Jordan, and in a short time the Israelites, especially the tribes of Ephraim and Manasseh, were reduced to galling serfdom. From Manasseh arose the deliverer in the person of a brave, patriotic, God-fearing farmer, by the name of Gideon. So great was the gratitude of the Israelites that they offered to make Gideon king, but Gideon declined the honor. However, after his death, Abimelech, the son of Gideon and a Canaanitish woman, secured the kingship, after slaying all the other sons of Gideon but one. The rule of Abimelech proved disastrous and soon came to an ignominious end. 5. The next crisis was caused by the Ammonites, another East Jordan people. They took advantage of the unsettled conditions in Israel, and seized the Israelite territory east of the Jordan. In time they began to cross the Jordan, and the Israelites, with-

out a competent leader, were worsted. Finally they called to their aid Jephthah, of the tribe of Gad, who defeated the Ammonites and dislodged them from all the Israelite territory. 6. The sixth and severest crisis was caused by the Philistines in the southwest. The Book of Judges describes the exploits of Shamgar and Samson against the Philistines, but their deeds of personal daring were without permanent results. The struggles continued for several centuries, and ended in the complete triumph of Israel.

3. The Books of Samuel and Kings. The events leading to the establishment of the monarchy and the history of the United Kingdom are recorded in the Books of Samuel and 1 Kings 1—11. In both Samuel and Kings earlier and later strata may be distinguished. Evidently older material was taken by a later compiler and embodied by him into the present books, he supplying at the same time such connecting links as were needed in order to make a continuous narrative.

The narratives center around the great personalities of the age. In 1 Samuel 1—7 Eli and Samuel are the chief characters; in chapters 8—14, Samuel and Saul; in chapters 15—31, Saul and David. From the time David appears upon the scene the sympathies of the writer are largely with him. The central figure of Second Samuel is David. Chapters 1—7 record the successive steps by which David came to the throne of all Israel, his capture of Jerusalem, and the transference thither of the ark. Chapter 8 epitomizes his public acts, bringing his history to a close. It anticipates events which are described more fully in the succeeding section. Chapters 9—20 report in greater detail events in David's private and court life. The remaining chapters, 21—24, constitute an appendix, consisting in part of extracts from old records of the reign of David, in part of lists of David's heroes and their deeds, and in part of poetical material assigned to David. The history of David is concluded and that of Solomon introduced in 1 Kings 1, 2. Subsequent

events in Solomon's reign are recorded in chapters 3—11, special stress being laid upon the building and dedication of the temple.

4. Events Leading to the Establishment of the Monarchy. The struggles with the Philistines brought Israel to the verge of destruction. The case seemed absolutely hopeless after the decisive victory of the Philistines at Aphek (1 Sam. 4), when Jehovah Himself seemed unable to stem the tide against his chosen people. The defeat of Israel involved a twofold danger: (1) political, (2) religious. The Hebrew armies were demoralized, and there was nothing to prevent the Philistines from overrunning and annexing the entire Israelite territory, which would mean to Israel the loss of political independence. More serious even was the religious danger. At Aphek Israel had put its trust in Jehovah. The people had sent for the ark, the external symbol of the divine presence, believing that with Jehovah in their midst defeat would be impossible. The battle went against them; apparently Jehovah had failed them, or else the gods of the Philistines were stronger than He. In either case the question would arise, Is it worth while to serve Him if He is unable or unwilling to help?

One man, Samuel, saw the need of the hour. He realized that if the religion of Jehovah and the national life were to be preserved, two things were needed: (1) a more complete union of the different clans and tribes, (2) a leader who could command and inspire men. Experience taught that the former could be secured only through emphasizing the religious bond, which bound the heterogeneous elements together in the beginning; hence Samuel, assisted by the sons of the prophets, sought to recall the people to Jehovah. It came also to be seen that to cement and maintain the union a more permanent form of government needed to be established; and as the kingship was the form adopted by Israel's neighbors, the attention naturally turned in that direction. Moreover, Samuel found a man who, he thought, possessed

qualities of leadership and promised to be the proper person to inaugurate the new form of government. Him Samuel anointed king; and when Saul had given evidence of his bravery at Jabesh-Gilead he was made king (1037 B. C.).

5. The United Monarchy.

a. King Saul and His Reign. After his election Saul was compelled, first of all, to win his country from the Philistines. In part he was successful in this attempt; however, the struggles continued during his entire reign and finally cost him his life. Of other wars the expedition against Amalek receives special mention, because of its important bearing upon the subsequent career of the king.

The narratives centering around Saul deal more extensively with events touching his personal life than with his wars, and on the whole Saul appears in an unfavorable light. At first he had the hearty support of Samuel, but soon differences arose which in the end led to a complete break. Samuel was the representative of the religious-national class, Saul of the military-political party. The constant military activities of Saul were not conducive to the development of the finer qualities of the king, and soon it became evident that, whatever the good points in his character and person, he failed to appreciate the spiritual and ethical conceptions of Samuel. As a result the latter became convinced that Saul was not the man to lead Israel so that it could fulfill its God-given mission to mankind; he broke permanently with the king and selected as his successor one who was more in accord with the ideals represented by the religion of Jehovah.

The breach with Samuel caused Saul to lose the support of the best elements in the nation. This made the king morose and melancholy. To cheer him the lad David, skilled in music, was brought to the court. He soon won the hearts of all, including the king's daughter. He also distinguished himself in war. These successes made Saul insanely jealous, and he determined to slay David. The latter was finally compelled to flee from the court; on several occasions his life

was threatened, but when Saul fell into his power he magnanimously spared him. Weary of his wanderings, he at last fled to the Philistines, where he would be safe from the king's attack. Soon the Philistines, encouraged by the presence with them of the brave Israelite hero, made a new attack upon Israel. The battle took place at Mount Gilboa, and in the engagement, which proved disastrous to Israel, Saul committed suicide.

Though on the whole Saul proved a failure, it is not fair to overlook the good points in his character. The record pictures him as a simple-minded, impulsive, courageous warrior, and loyal patriot; but he was deficient in the maturer qualities demanded by his position, executive ability, tact, the power of organization, and, above all, patience and persistency. In addition, and this was the most serious defect in a king of Israel, he was unable to understand and appreciate the higher religious experiences and ideals which enlightened souls like Samuel were beginning to possess and without which he could never be an ideal representative of Jehovah upon the throne of Israel.

b. King David and His Reign. As soon as the news of Saul's death spread, the elders and principal men of Judah made David their king. For about seven years he was king of Judah only, while Ishbaal, a son of Saul, was king over a small kingdom in the north. When at last Abner, the commander-in-chief of the north, and Ishbaal himself were assassinated, all the people turned to David. By the selection of a new political center, Jebus—Jerusalem—in the conquest of which north and south co-operated, he strengthened the union. The establishment of a royal sanctuary in the same place also would cause people from both sections to come there. The surrounding nations were either conquered or friendly relations were established with them, until his sway extended from the Lebanon in the north to the Red Sea in the south, and from the Mediterranean in the west to the Euphrates and the Syrian Desert in the east. Naturally the extension

of power and territory led to a more complete organization of the army and the court.

The domestic and court life of David was not as satisfactory and glorious as was his public life. The rebellion of his son Absalom and the events leading up to it must have cast a broad shadow over his household; the murder of Uriah, his marriage with Bathsheba, and the intrigues resulting from it, dim somewhat the glory of his reign. David was, indeed, not without his gross faults; nevertheless his intentions seem to have been in the right direction; and it is this fact, illustrated more or less consistently in all his life, which caused him to be called a man after God's own heart. During the closing years of his reign David seems to have withdrawn more and more from public activities, and yet at his death he left to his successor a strong and mighty empire.

c. King Solomon and His Reign. The monarchy was a recent experiment in Israel, and the laws of succession had not been definitely fixed. However, in accord with the custom prevalent among other peoples, the oldest son of the king seems to have been considered the natural successor, though apparently the people retained the right to reject him if they saw fit. The oldest living son of David was Adonijah, who considered himself entitled to the throne; but he had a powerful rival in Solomon, the son of the favorite Bathsheba, and after much intrigue the latter was anointed king. On the whole, the reign of Solomon was disastrous. He adopted the methods of an Oriental despot, with lofty political ambitions, and lacking in appreciation of the spiritual religion of Jehovah. True, he erected the magnificent temple; and this act is the chief glory of his reign, and has caused later generations to overlook many of his faults and follies; but he was equally ready to build sanctuaries for other deities when his wife requested him to do so.

Solomon is renowned for his wisdom, and the author of Kings has preserved several illustrations of his sagacity. But wisdom with the author of Kings is not what it is in the

Wisdom Literature or what is suggested by the term to-day. The absence of moral and spiritual perception was not incompatible with it, for the writer is thinking only of the secular type of wisdom, illustrations of which may be found among other Oriental peoples; and Solomon's mistakes as a ruler did not impair his reputation as the most famous wise man of his age and race. As a result of his policy he left Israel far weaker than it was when he ascended the throne, and it was during his reign that the seeds of decadence were sown which led to the dissolution of the kingdom. In addition to the building of the temple, which proved of the most far-reaching significance, three things stand out prominently in the reign of Solomon, all of which had disastrous effects upon the nation's life: 1. The revolts in Edom and Damascus, which showed that Israel was losing its hold on the nations conquered by David. 2. The oppression of the people, which caused dissatisfaction with the dynasty of David. 3. Commercial and marriage alliances, which opened the way for the introduction of foreign customs and religious ideas.

Lesson Outline:

The Books of Judges and Ruth.
The Judges and their work.
Conditions in Palestine at the beginning of the period of Judges.
Principal events during the period.
Contents of the Books of Samuel and Kings.
Events leading to the establishment of the monarchy.
King Saul and his reign.
King David and his reign.
King Solomon and his reign.

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Topics for Special Study:

1. Religious conditions in Israel in the period of the Judges.
2. The military successes of David.

Topics for Class Discussion:

1. What was the real work of the Judges?
2. Name the principal events of the period of the Judges?
3. Give the principal causes leading to the establishment of the monarchy.
4. Discuss the reign of Saul.
5. Describe the elements of strength in David.
6. Characterize the reign of Solomon.

CHAPTER IX

THE DIVIDED MONARCHY, THE EXILE, AND THE RESTORATION

1. Sources of Information.

a. The Two Books of Kings. The Books of Kings are the principal historical sources for the period of the divided monarchy. The author of the books gathered his material from earlier sources; his own work is most apparent in the recurring formulas which constitute the frame work into which the citations from the older sources are fitted. The opening formula is a little more complete in the case of the kings of Judah than in that of the kings of Israel. In the case of the former it gives (1) the synchronisms with the kingdom of Israel; (2) the age of the monarch at the time of his accession; (3) the length of his reign; (4) the name of the king's mother; (5) a brief judgment on his character and reign. In the case of Israel it gives (1) the synchronisms with Judah; (2) the length of the king's reign; (3) a brief judgment, always unfavorable. The closing formula assumes the following form: (1) The compiler's reference to his principal source of information; (2) mention of the king's death and burial; (3) name of the successor. One marked feature of these formulas is the stereotyped judgment upon each king, especially with reference to their attitude toward the high places. From this and other facts it is evident that the interests of the compiler were religious, rather than political; which, in turn, explains why so many events of importance to the modern historian were either ignored or received only passing notice.

Within this framework the compiler inserted, practically

without alteration—as may be seen from the change in style when there is a change in source—the older material, consisting in part of brief summaries of political events, in part of longer narratives not directly concerned with the public doings of the kings. The latter, most prominent among them the biographies of Elijah and Elisha, may have originated partly from prophetic circles and partly from priestly centers. The work reached its final form soon after the destruction of Jerusalem in 586 B. C.

b. Sources of Information for the Later Period. The closing verses of the Second Book of Kings relate two incidents: (1) the brief rule of Gedaliah and his assassination; (2) the release from prison of Jehoiachin, king of Judah, who was carried into exile in 597. No Biblical historical book gives a description of the life of the Jews in exile. As far as the Old Testament writings are concerned, the principal source of information on this point is the Book of Ezekiel. The Books of **Ezra** and **Nehemiah** deal with the restoration. They furnish glimpses of the first return in 537 and the early experiences of the restored exiles; concerning the activities of Ezra and Nehemiah their information is much fuller. The two books appear in the Jewish canon as one, and together with Chronicles are probably the work of an author who lived in the latter part of the fourth century B. C. This author used, in addition to other material, personal memoirs of Ezra and Nehemiah, who are the heroes of the two books. Notwithstanding the late date of the books in their present form, there seems no reason for doubting that they present even in the portions originating with the compiler, a substantially correct picture of the experiences and struggles of the post-exilic community. The Book of Ezra falls naturally into two sections: I. The return of the exiles under Sheshbazzar, chapters 1—6; II. The return under Ezra, and the reforms attempted by him, chapters 7—10. The Book of Nehemiah may be divided into three parts: I. First visit of Nehemiah to Jerusalem, and the build-

ing of the city walls, chapters 1—7; II. Solemn promulgation of the Law, chapters 8—10; III. Various lists, dedication of the walls, Nehemiah's second visit and subsequent reforms, chapters 11—13.

c. The Books of Chronicles. The two Books of Chronicles, which appear as one in the Jewish canon, were written by an unknown author some time before 300 B. C. The books are not a continuation of Kings, but cover practically the same ground as the historical writings from Genesis to Kings; in other words, they embrace the period from Adam to the edict of Cyrus, in 538 or 537, permitting the exiled Jews to return to Jerusalem; the genealogies are continued to even a later date. The viewpoint of the chronicler is not that of the earlier historical writers, for while in the other books prophetic elements predominate, the Books of Chronicles are permeated by the priestly spirit, and might be called an *Ecclesiastical History.* The contents of Chronicles may be outlined as follows: I. History of events from Adam to Saul, 1 Chron. 1—9; this is almost entirely in the form of genealogies; II. History of David, 1 Chron. 10—29; III. The Reign of Solomon, 2 Chron. 1—9; IV. History of Judah, from the division of the kingdom to the restoration, 2 Chron. 10—36.

The chronicler seems to be dependent, directly or indirectly, upon the Pentateuch, Joshua, and Ruth, and much more extensively upon Samuel and Kings. In addition he used numerous other sources, to which frequent references are made. But the material thus received by the compiler is not slavishly copied by him; he alters it by making additions or subtractions to suit his own peculiar purpose. It is quite evident that he means to give a history of *Judah* only, with special reference to the temple and the religious institu tions and practices centered in it; whatever had no bearing upon these subjects was either rapidly passed over or entirely omitted. Moreover, in the selection and arrangement of the material he seems to have been prompted by a didactive mo-

tive rather than by a strictly historical aim. His aim appears to be to teach that virtue and vice, in private life or in national affairs, invariably receive their dues; past history is drawn upon to illustrate and enforce this teaching.

d. The Book of Esther. Of the books reckoned among the historical books in the English Old Testament one remains to be considered, namely, Esther. The tone of the Book of Esther compares unfavorably with the spirit of almost every other Old Testament book. Like the Book of Ruth, it deals with a special incident; but while Ruth belongs to the period of the Judges, Esther takes us to the post-exilic period, the days of Xerxes (485-465 B. C.) The story relates how Esther, a Jewish resident in the Persian capital Susa, rose to be queen of Xerxes, and how she succeeded in rescuing her countrymen from the destruction which Haman, the king's favorite, had prepared for them. "The story is well told. The queen of Xerxes is deposed for contumacy, and her crown is set upon the head of Esther, a lovely Jewish maiden. Presently the whole Jewish race is imperiled by an act of Mordecai, the foster-father of Esther, who refuses to do obeisance to Haman, a powerful and favorite courtier. Haman's plans for the destruction of the Jews are frustrated by Esther, acting on a suggestion of Mordecai. The courtier himself falls from power, and is finally hanged on the gallows he had prepared for Mordecai, while Mordecai, the Jew, is exalted to the place next to the king, and the Jews, whom the initial decree had doomed to extermination, turn the tables by slaying over 75,000 of their enemies throughout the empire, including the ten sons of Haman. In memory of the deliverance the Purim festival is celebrated on the 14th and 15th of the month Adar."

The object of the book is apparently twofold: (1) to explain the origin of the Purim festival, (2) to glorify the Jewish people. Its date can not be definitely fixed; but it is not impossible that it represents a phase of the fierce Palestinian Judaism of the second century B. C.

2. **The Division of the Kingdom.** The events leading to the division of the kingdom are described in detail. The people, dissatisfied with the policy of oppression introduced by Solomon, demanded of his son a reduction of the burden, but he stubbornly refused; whereupon the northern tribes cut themselves loose from the house of David, and elected as their king Jeroboam, of the tribe of Ephraim. It must not be thought, however, that the stubbornness of Rehoboam was the only cause of the division. The narratives suggest at least one other important factor, namely, the attitude of the prophets. The latter realized that a continuation of Solomon's policy would mean ruin to the religion of Jehovah; on the other hand, they thought that with the resources divided, the carrying out of his policy would be rendered impossible; hence, to save religion they were ready to sacrifice the union. But to understand the full cause it is necessary to turn back a few chapters in Hebrew history. The earliest records in the Books of Joshua and Judges present to our view two groups of tribes: on the one hand, the tribes in the north and center; on the other, Judah and Simeon. Each group fought its own battles and wrestled with its own problems. The Song of Deborah (Judges 5), which describes the war of independence in the north, does not even mention Judah and Simeon. Never during the period of the Judges was the gulf bridged over, and it is a significant fact that the dividing line of the earlier period became practically the dividing line between the kingdoms of Israel and Judah. There were especially two facts that caused and helped to maintain the division: 1. A line of strong Canaanitish cities, of which Jebus was one, extended almost entirely across the land from east to west, thus cutting off the north from the south; 2. The southern tribes seem to have absorbed an unusually large native element, which tended to neutralize the mutual attraction of blood and religion.

Under the stress of a common danger the tribes united for a while under the standard of Saul. But the support of

the south was soon withdrawn, when David, who belonged to the South, was driven from the court. The readiness with which the elders of Judah proceeded after the death of Saul to make David their king, shows conclusively that the union of north and south was not very strong. When the sword cut down Abner and Ishbaal and left the north without a leader, necessity compelled the northern tribes to submit to David, but the weakness of the union showed itself when, after the rebellion of Absalom, the north revolted and had to be subdued by force of arms. Solomon took care, in the beginning of his reign, to remove by the sword the persons who might prove troublesome. Perhaps he felt too secure after this, for his conduct was by no means such as would reconcile the people to himself. Although for a time they may have been dazzled by the splendor of his reign, they soon discovered that the glitter was not all gold. There could be but one outcome to his policy. To reduce to serfdom a people which a generation before was free and independent, meant inevitable rebellion as soon as opportunity would offer.

3. **The Divided Kingdom.**

a. Important Events in the History of the Northern Kingdom. If the year of the division is placed at about 937, as is commonly done, the history of the Kingdom of Israel, from the division to the fall of Samaria, which marked its downfall, in 722, covers approximately 215 years. Of the more important events during this period the following may be mentioned: 1. The establishment of the royal sanctuaries at Dan and Bethel, for the purpose of counteracting the attractiveness of the temple worship in Jerusalem. 2. The frequent changes in dynasties and numerous assassinations. An idea of the unsettled conditions in Israel may be gathered from the fact that during the 215 years of its existence Israel had altogether nineteen kings, belonging to nine distinct dynasties. During the same period Judah had only twelve kings, with no change of dynasties. 3. The rise of the dynasty of Omri, about 885, and the splendid reign of its

founder marks a new epoch. The genius of Omri manifested itself in the selection of the hill of Samaria as the site of his capital. Though he suffered some reverses, on the whole his reign was exceedingly successful, and he raised the northern kingdom to a position of power such as it had not enjoyed before. 4. The reign of Ahab is made prominent by the introduction of Baal worship and the activity of the great prophets Elijah and Elisha. 1 Kings 17—2 Kings 13 is devoted to the lives and activities of these two men of God. Ahab adopted the policy of Solomon, and thus aroused much resentment among the people. 5. The revolution of Jehu. With the death of Ahab, about 853, began a series of disasters for Israel. At last the religious storm, which had been brewing for some time, broke in the revolution of Jehu, apparently instigated by the prophets, which swept the Baal cult from the land and the hated dynasty of Omri from the throne. 6. Jeroboam II, who reigned from about 782 to 741, was the most successful king of the Jehu dynasty. Through the extension of territory, the revival of commerce, and the development of the natural resources of the land, Israel rose, during his reign, to a pitch of power and prosperity unheard of since the days of Solomon. The evils which resulted from this material prosperity called forth the prophets Amos and Hosea. 7. From the summit of glory and splendor under Jeroboam, Israel fell within one generation to the lowest depths of disaster. Four of the six kings who succeeded him were struck down by assassins, and one was slain by foreign invaders; only one died a natural death. This condition of anarchy and the foolish foreign policy of the rulers culminated in the destruction of Samaria and the kingdom in 722/721 B. C. 8. From the days of Omri on, the fortunes of Israel were closely bound up with the fortunes of Assyria. The first mention of an Israelite king in an Assyrian inscription is in an account of the battle of Karkar, in 854, where Ahab is said to have been one of the allies to resist the Assyrian armies. After that Assyria interfered again

and again in Israel's history, and the kingdom's downfall was caused by its armies.

b. Important Events in the History of the Southern Kingdom. The territory of the south was only about one-half that of the north, while the arable land was less than one-fourth. But though in size the northern kingdom was superior to the southern, Judah enjoyed several advantages, which proved of considerable importance in its later history. Among these were (1) its seclusion, which helped to keep away foreign invaders; (2) the condition of its soil, which yielded only a meager subsistence in return for the most wearisome labor, was calculated to develop hardy, earnest, courageous men, fond of their rocky hills and tenacious of their peculiar customs and religion; (3) the unity of population and interests made of Judah a perfect social unit bound together by the closest natural bonds; (4) the centralization of government in Jerusalem under a hereditary dynasty, which enjoyed the prestige of the name of David and all the cumulative power which comes from an uninterrupted succession, tended to give stability to the southern kingdom; (5) another element of strength was furnished by the centralization of worship in the temple. Religion had proved a bond of union in the past. Now the temple in Jerusalem, with its splendid equipment, commanded the reverence and homage of all the people of Judah, and was, therefore, a potent factor for union.

Partly at least as a result of these advantages the southern kingdom continued to exist about 135 years longer than Israel. It came to an end with the fall and destruction of Jerusalem, in 586 B. C. During the period of its existence, lasting about 350 years, Judah had nineteen kings and one queen, all the kings belonging to the dynasty of David; but few of them were capable and efficient rulers, and by no means all were as loyal adherents of the religion of Jehovah as was their ancestor David. Asa, Jehoshaphat, Hezekiah, and Josiah receive special commendation for their piety, and

a few of the others increased the welfare of their country. Of the more important events the following may be briefly noted: 1. The long struggles with the north, which began under Rehoboam and continued, with few intermissions, to the close of Israel's history. 2. The invasion of Judah by Shishak of Egypt five years after the death of Solomon, which proved a serious blow to the southern kingdom and weakened its military resources. 3. The reign of Jehoshaphat, who introduced a new stage in the nation's life with respect to popular instruction and the administration of justice. 4. The six years' reign of Athaliah, the daughter of Ahab and Jezebel of Israel. She advocated Baal worship, but her rule came to an ignominious end through a rebellion headed by the chief priest Jehoiada. 5. The prosperous reign of Uzziah, who was a contemporary of Jeroboam II, of Israel. As in Israel, the material prosperity was followed by serious religious and social evils. 6. The activity of Isaiah and Micah, who during the latter part of the eighth century tried to recall Judah to a purer worship and more righteous life. 7. The partial reforms instituted by King Hezekiah and aided by the two prophets named. During his reign occurred also the invasion of Judah by Sennacherib of Assyria, which culminated in the remarkable deliverance of Jerusalem. 8. The reactionary reign of Manasseh, who sought to root out entirely the worship of Jehovah. 9. The reform movement under Josiah in 621, which marked the beginning of a new epoch in the religious development of Judah, though its immediate results were somewhat disappointing. 10. The conflicts with the Assyrians and their successors, the Chaldeans, which began during the eighth century and resulted in the downfall of the State in 586 B. C.

4. The Exile and the Restoration. Many of the Jews were carried into exile to Babylonia after the capture of Jerusalem. The number of captives it is difficult to estimate; the total was probably somewhat less than fifty thousand. The exiled Jews were in no sense slaves; they seem to have

been free in every respect except in the choice of residence. Many grew wealthy, and many turned away from the religion of Jehovah. But there were others, in whom the teaching of Jeremiah, emphasizing the individual and spiritual aspect of religion, had taken root; these continued their allegiance to Jehovah, under the guidance of Ezekiel a purer type of religion was developed, and the hopes of a restoration to the Promised Land were kept alive. There are especially three aspects of the religious development during the period of exile that stand out prominently: 1. A vital sense of repentance was generated; 2. Religion came to be considered a more spiritual and personal matter; 3. Monotheism was placed upon a firmer basis.

After the death of Nebuchadnezzar, the conqueror of Judah, the power of Babylon rapidly declined, until, in 538, Cyrus, the king of Anshan, became master of the city and empire. He showed great leniency toward the nations deported by the Babylonians and gave them permission to return to their homes. In 537 a company of Jews, consisting of from forty to fifty thousand persons, took advantage of this permission and returned to Palestine. Immediately on reaching Jerusalem an altar was erected and the foundations of a new temple were laid. But the religious interest soon died out, and when opposition arose from without, the people dropped the building enterprise. In 520 the two prophets Haggai and Zechariah arose, urging the people to resume building operations, as only in this wise they could secure the favor of Jehovah. Their efforts were crowned with success, the operations were resumed, and in 516 the temple was dedicated.

The information concerning the period between the completion of the temple in 516 and the arrival of Ezra in 458 is rather scanty, but the following features stand out prominently: (1) The rise of skepticism due to the non-fulfillment of prophecy and the observation of the inequalities of life; (2) neglect of offerings and tithes; (3) oppression of the

poor; (4) marriage alliances with heathen women; (5) divorce; (6) Sabbath desecration. In 458 came Ezra, the scribe, and in 445 Nehemiah, the governor. Both were intensely interested in the best welfare of their countrymen, and both came with privileges and authority bestowed upon them by the Persian king. Ezra immediately attacked the abuses, though apparently without much result; but when Nehemiah came and the two joined forces, things began to come to pass. The city wall was built, and then attempts were made to bring about far-reaching reforms covering all the points enumerated. This was done chiefly by establishing the law as final authority over every detail of public and private life. These reforms were not carried out without arousing strenuous opposition. Especially the provisions for the putting away of foreign wives aroused resentment, but Nehemiah was immovable. One of the results of this measure was the secession of Manasseh, the grandson of the high priest Eliashib, who refused to give up his wife. Whereupon his father-in-law, Sanballat, is said to have established for him a rival temple at Gerizim, the religious center of the Samaritan community.

5. **From Nehemiah to the Opening of the Christian Era.** The Old Testament historical books do not take us beyond the reforms of Nehemiah in 432. Of later events, reflected in part in the latest Old Testament writings, in part in the apocryphal books, the following may be mentioned as the most important: 1. The growth of legalism and, accompanying it, the development of a spirit of narrow exclusiveness on the part of the Jews. 2. Alexander the Great became master of Palestine in 332. 3. After the division of his kingdom Palestine became, in 301, a province of Egypt, and remained such until 198. This period was, on the whole, one of marked prosperity. 4. The privileges offered to Jewish colonists by the kings of Egypt and Syria caused the scattering of the Jews in many directions. 5. Greek influence became very strong in some parts of Palestine after the con-

quest of Alexander. 6. The translation of the Hebrew Bible into Greek was begun in Alexandria about the middle of the third century B. C. 7. Palestine became a province of the Seleucidan kingdom of Syria in 198. 8. The attempts of Antiochus Epiphanes to stamp out Judaism caused the Maccabean revolt in 168 B. C. 9. During the second century B. C. arose the Jewish sects of the Pharisees, the Sadducees, and the Essenes. 10. The Roman rule in Palestine began in 63 B. C.

Lesson Outline:

The two Books of Kings.
Sources of information on the period of the Exile and the Restoration.
The Books of Chronicles.
The Book of Esther.
The causes of the division of the kingdom.
Important events in the history of the northern kingdom.
Important events in the history of the southern kingdom.
The Babylonian captivity and restoration.
Historical events after the time of Nehemiah, 432 B. C.

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Topics for Special Study:

1. The purpose of the Chronicler.
2. The effect of the Babylonian captivity upon the religion of the Jews.

Topics for Class Discussion:

1. Point of view of the Books of Kings.
2. Point of view of the Books of Chronicles.
3. The causes of the division of the kingdom.
4. Chief events of the history of Israel.
5. Advantages of the southern kingdom.
6. Chief events of the history of Judah.
7. Describe the Babylonian captivity.
8. Tell of the work of Ezra and Nehemiah.

CHAPTER X

THE DEVOTIONAL LITERATURE OF THE OLD TESTAMENT

1. Poetry in the Old Testament. Since the devotional literature of the Old Testament is in the form of poetry, it seems advisable to consider briefly the general subject of Hebrew poetry before taking up the study of the devotional books. The Old Testament has preserved a large amount of this poetry, but there are references and allusions which show that much of it has been lost. For example, reference is made to the Book of the Wars of Jehovah (Num. 21:14) and the Book of Jashar (Josh. 10:13), evidently collections of poems earlier than those now found in the Hebrew Scriptures. Old Testament poetry has to do with all experiences and conditions of life that yield themselves to poetic treatment. Much of this poetry is preserved in the historical books, and the translators of the Revised Version are to be commended for indicating the poetic form in the text. Some of these poetic compositions are secular in the sense that they center around secular themes, but even these are pervaded by a deep religious spirit. The best specimens of secular poetry are the Blessing of Jacob (Gen. 49:2-27); the Triumph Song over the destruction of the Egyptians (Ex. 15:1-18); the Blessing of Moses (Deut. 33:2-29); the Song of Deborah (Judges 5:2-31); the Fable of Jotham (Judges 9:8-15); the Lament of David over Saul and Jonathan (2 Sam. 1:19-27). The prophetic books also contain many fine specimens of poetry; and frequently the prophets rise to an elevated poetic style which can not easily be distin-

guished from poetry proper. In addition to these scattered poems the Old Testament contains five books that consist entirely, or almost so, of poetic compositions, namely, the Books of Job, Psalms, Proverbs, Song of Songs, and Lamentations. The author of Ecclesiastes is also at times led to express his thoughts in poetic form. These six books represent two of the five kinds of Old Testament literature distinguished in the first chapter, namely, the devotional and the wisdom literature.

a. Essential Characteristics of Hebrew Poetry. Poetry is defined by Leigh Hunt in these words: "Poetry is the utterance of a passion for truth, beauty, and power, embodying and illustrating its conceptions by imagination and fancy, and modulating its language on the principle of variety and uniformity." In this definition three essential characteristics of all true poetry are recognized: 1. The substance is emotional. It is the utterance of a passion for truth, beauty, and power. Poetry springs from the emotions, and therefore touches the emotions. 2. Its presentation is imaginative. Literalism is discarded, and imagination is given full sway in the presentation of the substance. 3. The inevitable result is the use of an emotional, sublime style, a style marked by the lively swing which is called rhythm. The formal element of rhythm, which may be defined as the harmonious repetition of certain fixed sound relations, is marked in classical poetry by the regulated succession of long and short syllables. This method has practically disappeared from modern western poetry, where the regulated succession of accented and unaccented syllables has taken its place. In addition, the rhythm may be emphasized by the use of rhyme, that is, the correspondence in sound of the final syllables in the lines. Rhyme is illustrated by the stanza:

> Just as I am, without one *plea,*
> But that Thy blood was shed for *me,*
> And that Thou bidst me come to *Thee:*
> O Lamb of God, I come!

The regulated succession of accented and unaccented syllables without rhyme, called "Blank Verse," is shown in these lines from the *Drama of the Exile,* by Mrs. Browning:

> If thou hadst gazed upon the face of God
> This morning for a moment, thou hadst known
> That only pity fitly can chastize,
> Hate but avenges.

The ancient Hebrews were an intensely religious people, and the emphasis upon religion supplied them with the emotional material which yields itself readily to poetic treatment. As Orientals they possessed the imagination needed in all poetic description. But where these two characteristics are found, rhythmic expression follows almost inevitably, provided the author possesses a poetic genius. However, for centuries no one knew the method of indicating rhythm in Hebrew poetry. The merit of discovering the secret belongs to Bishop Robert Lowth, at the time Professor of Poetry at Oxford, who, in 1753, published a work on "Sacred Poetry of the Hebrews," in which he pointed out that the external form of Hebrew poetry was not marked by rhyme, or the regulated succession of accented and unaccented, or long and short syllables, but by the arrangement of two clauses of approximately the same length, so that the second clause answers or otherwise completes the thought of the first. To this phenomenon he gave the name "Parallelism of Members."

Lowth distinguished three kinds of parallelism: 1. *Synonymous Parallelism;* that is, parallel arrangement in which the second line contains a thought identical with or similar to the thought of the first line. Compare, for example, Psalm 1:2:

> But his delight is in the law of Jehovah,
> And in His law doth he meditate day and night.

2. *Antithetic Parallelism.* Here the thought of the first line is confirmed or emphasized by contrast, the second line expressing the opposite thought; for example, Prov. 10:1:

> A wise son maketh a glad father,
> But a foolish son is the heaviness of his mother.

3. *Synthetic or Constructive Parallelism.* Here the second line contains neither a repetition of the thought of the first line, nor a contrast to it, but in different ways advances it. There may be a simple completion of the thought, as in Psalm 2:6:

> Yet I have set my King
> Upon Zion, my holy hill;

or, the second line may supply a comparison or motive; for example, Proverbs 15:17:

> Better is a dinner of herbs where love is
> Than a stalled ox and hatred therewith.

These are the three varieties distinguished by Lowth, and for practical purposes this classification may be sufficient; however, one other may be mentioned: 4. *Climactic Parallelism.* Here the first line is incomplete; the second line takes up words from it and then completes the thought; for example, Psalm 29:1:

> Ascribe unto Jehovah, O ye sons of the mighty,
> Ascribe unto Jehovah, glory and strength.

b. Species of Poetic Composition. The three principal kinds of poetic composition are Epic, Dramatic, Lyric. 1. Epic Poetry is descriptive, and is intended to be recited. It deals with external objects, of which it gives a narrative in poetic form; the events portrayed may be partly real and partly fictitious, or all fictitious. 2. Dramatic Poetry is concerned with the presentation of acts and events, and is intended to be acted. It makes its appeal to the eye as well as to the ear. There are two subdivisions of dramatic poetry: tragedy and comedy. 3. Lyric Poetry, which is subjective. It sets forth the inward occurrences of the writer's own mind, his feelings and reflections, his joys and sorrows, cares and complaints, aspirations and despairs, etc.

The Hebrews never created a verse-epic nor a drama in the sense of a poetic composition intended to be acted. As far as we know now, the Babylonians alone among the

Semites have developed epic poetry. While there is no drama in the strict sense of the word in the Old Testament, the dramatic element is not altogether absent. The Book of Psalms, for example, offers many specimens of dramatic arrangement, as does also the Prophetic literature. In structure the Book of Job is of the nature of a drama, and may be termed a dramatic poem; the Song of Songs also is interpreted by many as a dramatic poem. The Hebrew poets seem to have been content with cultivating lyric poetry in all its varieties. In lyric poetry proper the poet gives expression to his emotions and subjective experiences, or reproduces in words the impressions which nature and history have made upon him. By the side of this lyric poetry proper the Old Testament contains a species of poetry that may be called thought lyric, also called gnomic poetry. In this kind of poetry the author does not express so much his emotions and experiences as his thoughts and observations on human life and society, or generalizations concerning conduct and character. Only very few specimens of secular gnomic poetry are preserved; the finest of these is the fable of Jotham, in Judges 9:8-15. Its religious and ethical forms are found in the so-called wisdom literature, especially in the Book of Proverbs, which contains fables, parables, proverbs, riddles, moral and political maxims, satires, philosophic and speculative sentences.

2. The Devotional Books of the Old Testament. In this chapter the term "devotional" is used of those poetic compositions which are intended to portray the inner religious experiences and emotions of the authors, created and fostered by their close and intimate fellowship with Jehovah. These expressions are cast in the form of lyric poetry. This form of poetry is scattered through the various historical and prophetic books. A small percentage of it is secular in the sense that it centers around secular themes, but in view of the fact that the entire Old Testament is pre-eminently a book of religion, it is only natural that practically all the poetry in it

should be of a religious nature. In addition to the widely scattered poems, the Old Testament contains two books consisting entirely of religious lyrics, which may be called in a narrower sense books of devotion, namely, the Books of Lamentations and Psalms.

a. The Book of Lamentations. In the English Old Testament, Lamentations is placed after Jeremiah, because tradition considers him the author of the book. In the Hebrew Bible it belongs to the third division, the writings; and it is one of the five Megilloth, or Rolls, which were read publicly in the synagogues at certain sacred seasons, Lamentations on the ninth day of the month Ab, the day on which the destruction of Jerusalem was commemorated. The contents make it evident that the book originated soon after the destruction of the Holy City, while the sufferings were still fresh in the minds of the people.

The book consists of five independent poems, all dealing with a common theme, namely, the calamities that befell the people of Judah and Jerusalem during the siege and subsequent capture of the city in 586 B. C. The description of the woes of the people is interspersed with confessions of guilt, exhortations to repentance, and supplication for the return of the divine favor. Four of the poems are arranged as alphabetic acrostics. "Exquisite," says Driver, "as is the pathos which breathes in the poetry of these dirges, they are thus, it appears, constructed with conscious art: they are not the unstudied effusions of natural emotion, they are carefully elaborated poems, in which no aspect of the common grief is unremembered, and in which every trait which might stir a chord of sorrow or regret is brought together for the purpose of completing the picture of woe."

b. The Book of Psalms. (1) Its Place in the Life of Devotion. The Book of Psalms consists of one hundred and fifty sacred lyrics, which are arranged in five books: I, 1—41; II, 42—72; III, 73—89; IV, 90—106; V, 107—150. This fivefold division was introduced to make the Psalter,

which was the temple hymnal, correspond to the Pentateuch, the sacred Law-book. Manifold were the moods and experiences of the authors of the Psalms, but there is one bond which unites them all into one living unity, namely, a sublime faith in Jehovah, the God of Israel. This variety on the one hand, and unity on the other, are the qualities which have given to the book such unique place in the religious life of the individual and of the Church. With full justice says Perowne: "No single book of Scripture, not even the New Testament, has perhaps, ever taken such hold on the heart of Christendom. None, if we dare judge, unless it be the Gospels, has had so large an influence in molding the affections, sustaining the hopes, purifying the faith of believers. With its words, rather than their own, they have come before God. In these they have uttered their desires, their fears, their confessions, their aspirations, their sorrows, their joys, their thanksgivings. By these their devotion has been kindled and their hearts comforted. The Psalter has been in the truest sense the prayer-book of both Jews and Christians."

(2) The Book of Psalms and the Rest of the Old Testament. The Book of Psalms has very fittingly been called the heart of the Old Testament, or even of the entire Bible. Indeed, the Psalms sustain a very intimate relation to the entire Old Testament. All the divine manifestations which receive a more objective treatment in other parts of the Old Testament are here viewed subjectively in their bearing and effect upon the personal experience of the author or of those in whose name he speaks. The moral law and the ritual as a means of approaching God are glorified, the lessons of history are appropriated, and the passion for truth and righteousness as preached by the prophets finds vivid expression in the words of the psalmists. There are also some psalms which reflect the influence of the wisdom movement, both in its practical and speculative aspects.

(3) Classification of the Psalms According to Subject Matter. A classification of the Psalms according to their con-

tents is almost impossible, because individual psalms very frequently present a mixed character. "We find rapture blend with pleading, or the night of sorrow lose itself in the morning of joy, mood succeeding mood, and experience passing into experience more rapidly than the sunshine and rain that blend and pass in the sweet confusion of an April morning. The rehearsal of God's mighty acts, which one generation tells to another, suddenly breaks away into penitence for national sin, or an outburst of thanksgiving which abundantly utters the memory of His great goodness." But though recognizing the difficulty of the task and the fact that any classification will be more or less open to criticism, a classification along broad lines may be suggestive. Where the classification is uncertain, a psalm may be mentioned in more than one group.

I. Psalms Which Do Not Reflect a Specific Historical Situation.

(1) *Hymns* in praise of God, as Creator, Governor, and Protector of the world and His people, suggested by the contemplation of His manifestations in nature, history, and personal experience. For example: Psalm 8, God's glory manifested in the creation of man; 19:1-6, in the heavens; 29, in the thunderstorm; 33, in His moral attributes, in creation, in His government, in His choice of Israel. To the same group belong 36, 65, 66, 76, 92, 103, 104, 107, 145—147. Similar in tone are Psalm 24:7-10; 47, 67, 93, 96—100, 111, 113, 115, 117, 118, 134—136, 148—150; but these differ from the preceding in that they contain invocations of a liturgical character.

(2) *Experiences;* that is, Psalms embodying the religious emotions arising from the poet's intimate fellowship with Jehovah, expressing confidence, resignation, spiritual yearnings, joy in God's presence, etc.: 16, 23, 26, 27, 42, 43, 62, 63, 84, 91, 121, 127, 128, 130, 131, 133, 138, 139. Here may

be mentioned also the eulogies of the law of Jehovah, 19:7-14; 119. In some psalms promises of confidence in the future are added to the expressions descriptive of present emotions; in others, petitions that Jehovah will judge the wicked who are trying to injure the psalmist: 9, 10, 11, 12, 14, 52, 53, 58, 64, 75, 82, 94.

(3) *Reflections:* (1) On God's moral government of the world—He blesses the righteous and punishes the wicked: 1, 34, 37, 90, 112. (2) The same with a marked didactic purpose; the author seeks to harmonize his belief in God's moral government of the world with the apparent inequalities of life: 49, 73. (3) On the character of the service and conduct acceptable to God: 15, 24:1-6; 32, 50.

II. Psalms Reflecting a Specific Historical Situation.

(1) ***Personal Psalms;*** **that is, psalms reflecting the personal** condition of the psalmist, either as an individual or as a representative of the pious community. (1) Petitions for help in sickness, persecution, or other trouble, or for forgiveness of sin, often accompanied by expressions of assurance that the prayer will be answered: 3—7, 13, 17, 22, 25, 27, 28, 31, 35, 38, 39, 40:11-17; 41, 51, 54—57, 59, 61, 69, 70, 71, 77, 86, 88, 109, 120, 140—142. (2) Thanksgiving for deliverance wrought: 18, 30, 40:1-10; 116, 144.

(2) *National Psalms;* that is, psalms reflecting conditions in the Holy City, or the religious community, or the nation. (1) Complaints of national oppression or disaster: 44, 60, 74, 79, 80, 83, 85, 94, 102, 123, 137. (2) Thanksgivings for mercies already received or promised: 46—48, 60, 66, 68, 76, 107, 108, 114, 124—126, 129. With special reference to Zion: 87, 122. (3) Retrospect of the national history, with special reference to the lessons deducible from it: 78, 81, 95, 105, 106.

(3) *Royal Psalms;* that is, psalms centering around an

historical or ideal ruler. (1) Thanksgiving, good wishes, and promises: 2, 18, 20, 21, 45, 72, 110, 132. (2) Prayers for his preservation, etc.: 89, 101.

3. Date and Authorship of the Psalms. The question of date and authorship is not as important in the case of the Psalms as it is in the case of the prophetic books and other Old Testament writings. A psalm remains a psalm, and may take the reader into the presence of God, no matter by whom and under what circumstances it was written. In the words of Davison: "The universality and, if we may say so, the timelessness of the Psalter are amongst its prominent characteristics. The personal elements which the Psalms contain are soon lost in the impersonal, the finite in the infinite. The singer seldom lingers long amidst the streets of the city, within the limits of a single nation or country, among the fields and the homesteads; he soon wings his flight into the upper air, from whence the whole familiar landscape dwindles to a mere speck. The psalmist, of all men, is alone with God and his own soul." Nevertheless the questions of date and authorship are of interest, and their determination is of value. In the first place, some of the Psalms are the outgrowth of definite historical situations. If so, they must remain more or less unintelligible unless the historical background can be determined. Moreover, though all the Psalms breathe the spirit of a living faith in God, they do show differences in religious and ethical conception. The proper use of the Psalms is dependent upon a right understanding of the different stages of religious conceptions reflected in the several psalms; but this in turn depends upon fixing, approximately at least, the dates of the psalms. Unfortunately all attempts to fix the dates of the psalms have failed to lead to certain results; and it is hardly wise to say more than that the Psalms originated during the period beginning with David and ending with the Maccabean struggles about 150 B. C. The following are named as authors in the psalm titles, which, however, are not integral parts of the Psalms:

1. Moses (90)	1
2. David (3-9, 11-32, 34-41, 51-65, 68-70, 86, 101, 103, 108-110, 122, 124, 131, 133, 138-145)	73
3. Solomon (72, 127)	2
4. Asaph (50, 73-83)	12
5. Sons of Korah (42, 44-49, 84, 85, 87, 88)	11
6. Ethan the Ezrahite (89)	1
7. Heman, the Ezrahite (88, also ascribed to the Sons of Korah)	
Total	100

4. The Compilation of the Psalter. The Psalter has rightly been called the hymn-book of the second temple. Whatever differences may exist between it and a modern hymnal—and there are many, since the Psalter contains many compositions which can in no sense be called hymns—the history of the Psalter is similar to that of a modern hymnal. "A true hymn-book," says Davison, "is not made, it grows." In a similar manner the Psalter has reached its present form as the result of a process of growth. It would seem that individual psalms were brought together into small collections; these small collections came to be combined into three larger collections, which were united into one book. Then, at a later time, this book was divided, after the analogy of the Pentateuch, into five books, in which form the Psalter has come down to the present.

Lesson Outline:

Poetry of the Old Testament.
Essential characteristics of Hebrew poetry.
Kinds of poetic composition.
Devotional books of the Old Testament: the Book of Lamentations; the Book of Psalms.
Classification of the Psalms according to subject matter.
Date and authorship of the Psalms.

Bibliography:

Davison, "The Praises of Israel."
Prothero, "The Psalms in Human Life."
Hastings, "One Volume Dictionary."
Commentaries: "Psalms," Kirkpatrick.

Topics for Special Study:

1. Titles and superscriptions of the Psalms.
2. Principal religious teachings of the Psalms.

Topics for Class Discussion:

1. Give examples of secular poems in the Old Testament.
2. What are the essential characteristics of Hebrew poetry?
3. Distinguish between the various forms of parallelism in Hebrew poetry.
4. What is the chief form of poetic composition found in the Bible?
5. Discuss the origin and contents of the Book of Lamentations.
6. What is the importance of Psalms to the religious life?
7. What is the relation of the Psalms to the rest of the Old Testament?
8. Discuss the classification of the Psalms.
9. What is to be said concerning the date and authorship of the Psalms?

CHAPTER XI

THE WISDOM LITERATURE OF THE OLD TESTAMENT

1. Philosophy Among the Hebrews. The Wisdom Literature of the Old Testament corresponds to the philosophic literature of other peoples. Philosophy, in the narrow sense, however, had no existence among the Hebrews, for a process of thinking free from presuppositions was unknown to them. Two fixed points were universally accepted by the Hebrew thinkers: (1) The existence of a personal God; (2) the reality of a divine revelation. Accordingly the primary aim of Hebrew philosophic thought was simply to penetrate deeper into the contents of these truths, to define them more clearly, and to apply them to the daily life.

While, therefore, in a strict sense, we can not speak of philosophic literature in the Old Testament, the latter contains a kind of literature which presents at least attempts at philosophizing, and which is clearly distinguished from other kinds of literature. This literature includes three of the canonical books: Job, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, and, according to one interpretation, the Song of Songs. To it belong also a number of psalms and parts of other Old Testament books.

2. The Aim and Function of the Wise Men. The origin of the wisdom literature may be traced in the last analysis to human need and the condescension of God to accommodate Himself to the peculiarities of men in His attempt to reach their hearts and consciences. Some men may be reached by an authoritative command in the name of one in whom they have confidence. Others are reached by way

of their æsthetic sensibilities through the ritual. Personal experience may rouse the dormant emotions of still others. But there always have been and still are those whose intellect must be carried, in part at least, before appeals to the heart and conscience can prove effective. Under the providence of God these different ways of approach were tried under the Old Testament dispensation. The prophet came with the authoritative "Thus saith Jehovah;" it was the priest's duty to make ritual's appeal effective; the psalmist gave expression to personal experience; and the wise man made his appeal to the intellect. Certainly, at times a prophet might assume the rôle of a priest, or vice versa, or the psalmist might fall into the strain of the wise man, or other interchanges of similar character might take place; nevertheless certain Old Testament references (for example, Jer. 18:18) make it clear that the wise men formed a distinct class of religious workers in Israel during a long period.

By the side of the wise men whose sayings and writings have been considered worthy of a place in the canon, there was a class of "false" wise men, corresponding to the false prophets and faithless priests against whom the prophets hurl such severe denunciations. While information concerning this class of men is not very extensive, we may assume that there were two kinds of false wise men as there were two kinds of false prophets: (1) The mercenary wise men, who called evil good and good evil from selfish motives. If it was to their interest to twist and pervert the moral precepts commonly recognized as true, they did not hesitate to do it. (2) The political wise men. These may have been patriotic, conscientious, and able men, but they lacked spiritual vision, and their advice was wholly determined by narrow, worldly, and political considerations.

3. Growth of the Wisdom Movement. The wisdom movement proper, as illustrated in the Old Testament, found expression at first in very simple form. The wise men accepted the great religious truths proclaimed by the prophets;

it was their business to apply them to the details of every-day life and instruct their contemporaries in that application. They did an important and necessary work; they pointed out constantly and persistently that religion can not be separated from the daily life. But the wise men were dealing with persons who, as far as the great mass of them was concerned, had hardly gone beyond the childhood stage in things religious and ethical; hence they must put the most profound truths in the simplest possible form. They must abstain, as far as possible, from all speculation, and confine themselves to simple, practical precepts which would appeal to the ordinary practical common sense of the hearer. Certainly, in time they would be compelled to rise above simple precepts and try to solve some of the more perplexing problems of life; on the other hand, there would always be a demand for the more simple sayings of these moral guides. The Old Testament contains specimens of these different productions of wisdom activity. The Book of Proverbs is a collection of the more simple, practical precepts, while the Books of Job and Ecclesiastes illustrate speculative wisdom.

a. Contents of the Book of Proverbs. The Book of Proverbs consists of eight parts, of unequal length, with a general heading; seven of these make up the collection of proverbs; the other, the first, appears to be prefixed as a suitable introduction. The heading is 1:1-6: The nature and object of proverbial wisdom. I. Chapter 1:7—9:18. Introduction: The Praise of Wisdom. The writer, speaking like a father, warns his son or disciple against the temptations and dangers to which he will be exposed, invites him affectionately to listen to his precepts, and commends to him the claims of wisdom to be his guide and friend. II. Chapter 10:1—22:16. Proverbs of Solomon. A collection of miscellaneous aphorisms on life and conduct. It contains some fine religious proverbs, but the generalizations are mostly drawn from secular life, and describe the fortune which may be expected to attend particular lines of conduct

or types of character. III. Chapter 22:17—24:22. The Words of the Wise. In contents this collection is similar to the preceding; it differs, however, in form; for it is "less a collection of individual proverbs than a body of maxims, in which proverbs are interwoven, addressed with a practical aim to an individual and worked up usually into a more or less consecutive argument." Its tone, also, is more hortatory than that of the preceding section. IV. Chapter 24:23-34, which has the title, "These are also sayings of the wise." An appendix to the preceding, displaying similar variety of form. V. Chapter 25:1—29:27. Has the title, "These are also proverbs of Solomon, which the men of Hezekiah, king of Judah, copied out." Meant as an appendix to Section II, but shows some differences. On the whole, the proverbs appear to spring from a changed state of society. Religious proverbs are rare. VI. Chapter 30:1-33. "The words of Agur, son of Jakeh, the oracle." A series of epigrams, from two to ten lines each. In verses 1 to 9 the divine transcendence is the subject. Verses 10 to 33 consist of nine groups of proverbs, each of which describes some quality or character in terms of either warning or commendation. VII. Chapter 31:1-9. "The words of Lemuel, a king; the oracle which his mother taught him." A series of maxims addressed to Lemuel by his mother, warning him against sensuality and immoderate indulgence in wine, and exhorting him to relieve the necessities and defend the cause of the poor. VIII. Chapter 31:10-31. An alphabetic acrostic, without any title. The description of a capable and virtuous housewife.

The date of the separate proverbs, and the compilation of these into collections, and finally into the present Book of Proverbs, is not easily determined. The process may have been similar to that in which the Psalter was formed. In general it may be said that the Proverbs originated during the period beginning with Solomon and ending with the Maccabean uprising. The period of compilation lies probably between about 350 and 150 B. C.

b. Permanent Value of the Book of Proverbs. There are two phases of religion: the one internal, the religious experience; the other external, the religious life. The two go together, though at times the one, at times the other, may receive special emphasis. The authors of the Proverbs emphasize chiefly the latter. They teach the most difficult of all lessons: how to practice religion, how to fulfill the duties and overcome the temptations of every-day life. But these wise men rested their practical teaching upon a religious basis. Underneath all their teaching there is a firm belief in the existence of a righteous God and the reality of His rule over the world, as also in the other great religious verities taught by the prophets. Far from disregarding religion, the writers of the Proverbs sought to make it the controlling motive of life and conduct. A profound religious spirit pervades the whole book; but in addition there are many passages (for example, 3:5-7; 16:3, 6, 9; or 23:17) which give definite expression to the lofty religious conceptions of the wise men. Nevertheless, as is natural in view of the purpose of the wise men, greater stress is laid upon ethics, the practice of religion. Nothing and no relation of life seems to have escaped the attention of the writers. Precepts are given concerning ordinary every-day conduct (for example, 10:4; 11:28; 12:10; 14:3), the relations of men to their fellows (11:1; 14:21; 17:5), domestic relations and happiness (6:20-22; 18:22; 31:10-31), national life and the proper attitude toward the government (14:34, 35; 16:12-15), and other relations and interests of life. The permanent value of the book is suggested in these words of Davison: "For the writers of Proverbs religion means good sense, religion means mastery of affairs, religion means strength and manliness and success, religion means a well-furnished intellect employing the best means to accomplish the highest ends. There is a healthy, vigorous tone about this kind of teaching which is never out of date, but which, human nature being what it is, is only too apt to disappear,

in the actual presentation of religion in the Church on earth."

4. Speculative Wisdom in the Old Testament. From simple practical precepts the wise men rose to speculation. Their speculative philosophy is theistic, for it starts from the presupposition that there is a personal God. Some traces of speculation are found in the Book of Proverbs, especially in the first nine chapters. It is seen also in some of the historical books, for example, in the Book of Judges, which furnishes a philosophy of the history of the period of the Judges in the light of a firm belief in Jehovah. Speculative philosophy appears also in the prophetic literature; for example, Amos 3:6, "Shall calamity befall a city, and Jehovah hath not done it?" The same prophet indulges in speculation when he explains the natural phenomena of famine, drought, blasting and mildew, and others, as punishments for Israel's disobedience (4:6-11). Of similar character is Isaiah 9:8-21. Other specimens of well-sustained speculation are offered by Habakkuk 1:1—2:5 and Malachi 2:17—4:3, and other prophetic books show traces of it. The wisdom movement, both in its practical and speculative aspects, is reflected also in some of the psalms. The most important of these are 1, 8, 15, 19, 29, 37, 49, 50, 73, 90, 92, 103, 104, 107, 139, 147, 148. Of the wisdom books proper, two are entirely given up to speculation: Job and Ecclesiastes. The former deals with the perplexing problem of evil and suffering, the latter with the perplexities of life in general.

5. The Book of Job. *a. Origin.* The Book of Job recounts how Job, a man of exemplary piety, was overtaken by an unprecedented series of calamities, and it reports the debate between Job and other speakers to which the occasion is supposed to have given rise. The experiences of the perfect Job raised the perplexing question, How can the suffering of a righteous man be harmonized with the belief in a holy and just God? The popular view, reflected in the

greater portion of the Old Testament, was that suffering was always a punishment for sin, prosperity a reward for piety. Such belief seemed in accord with the righteousness of Jehovah. Undoubtedly exceptions to the rule might be noted, but as long as the individual was looked upon simply as an atom in the national unit, the apparent inequalities in the fortunes of individuals would not constitute a pressing problem. When, however, especially through the teaching of Jeremiah and Ezekiel, the individual received proper recognition, an experience like that of Job was bound to create difficulties, for the suffering of a righteous man would seem to point to unfairness on the part of God. That this perplexity was felt is seen from allusions in the prophetic books. At last the time came when a wise man in Israel sought to solve the problem in the light of the religious knowledge he possessed. He took as the basis of his discussion the experience of Job, the tradition of which he may have found a popular possession. This material he arranged in the form of a drama, in which different speakers are introduced, each suggesting his own solution of the problem. The author of the book is not known, and its date is a matter of dispute; however, a date in the post-exilic period seems to be the most probable.

b. Contents of the Book of Job. The Book of Job falls naturally into five parts of unequal length: I. Chapters 1, 2. The Prologue (written in prose). The adversary is permitted by God to test Job's righteousness by depriving him of his wealth and children, and afflicting him with a loathsome disease. Job remains faithful. His three friends come to comfort him. II. Chapters 3—31. Debate between Job and his friends. Moved by the unspoken sympathy of his friends, Job breaks forth in a passionate cry, cursing the day of his birth and praying for death (3). This outburst of feeling gives occasion to his friends to speak, and so opens the debate. There are three cycles of speeches (4—14; 15—21; 22—31): in the first two the three friends of

Job speak, and Job replies to each; in the third Zophar is absent, but Job speaks three times. III. Chapters 32—37. The speeches of Elihu. Elihu, a young man who is represented as a bystander, has listened to the debate and, vexed with both Job and his friends, steps forward to set both right. IV. Chapters 38:1—42:6. The speeches of Jehovah, and Job's submission. When Elihu refrains from speaking, Jehovah intervenes and answers Job out of the whirlwind. The answer consists of two parts, each followed by a few words from Job. The aim of Jehovah's speeches is to bring Job, who has shown himself impatient, back into a right attitude of mind toward God. This is accomplished, for he admits the folly of his doubts and solemnly retracts his hasty and ill-considered words. V. Chapter 42:7-17. The epilogue. When Job is restored to a right attitude of mind he receives the divine commendation, while the friends are condemned for their foolish utterances. Then Job is blessed with prosperity twice as great as he enjoyed before.

c. The Problem of the Book of Job and Its Solution. The problem discussed by the author of the Book of Job is: How can the sufferings of a righteous man be harmonized with a belief in a holy and righteous God? Various solutions of this problem are suggested in different parts of the book: 1. The solution of the prologue—Suffering is a test of character. 2. The solution of the friends—Suffering is always punishment for sin. 3. The solution of Job—Job struggles long and persistently with the problem; a few times he seems to have a glimpse of a possible straightening-out of the present inequalities in an after life, but it is only a glimpse; he always sinks back to a feeling of uncertainty and perplexity. His general attitude is that there must be something out of gear in the world, for the righteousness of God can not be discerned as things are going now. 4. The solution of Elihu—Elihu agrees with the friends that suffering is closely connected with sin; but he emphasizes more than they the disciplinary purpose of suffering, which, he points out, is the

voice of God warning men to return to God. 5. The solution of Jehovah—The whole universe is an unfathomable mystery, in which the evil is no more perplexing than the good. In the presence of all mysteries the proper attitude is one of humble submission. 6. The solution of the epilogue—Returns to the opinion of the friends, for it teaches that righteousness will sooner or later be rewarded with prosperity even in this world.

The author nowhere states which of these conclusions he accepts as true; indeed, the book leaves the impression that the author is conscious of his inability to present an entirely satisfactory solution. One thing alone seems certain, that he means to reject most emphatically the traditional view defended by the friends, that suffering must always be explained as punishment for sin. The Book of Job presents the best that the human mind can do with a problem which has perplexed men throughout the ages; and it shows at the same time that the only solution possible is a solution of faith, with a lofty conception of God and a vision of life broad enough to include eternity, when the apparent inequalities of this life may be adjusted by a loving and righteous God.

6. **The Book of Ecclesiastes.** *a. Contents.* The Book of Ecclesiastes consists of a prologue, an epilogue, and the body of the book in four parts. I. Chapter 1:1-11. The Prologue. Statement of the problem: On the assumption that there is no hereafter and that man's deepest longings must be satisfied here, the author declares all human efforts in that direction in vain. II. Chapter 1:12—12:8. Proof of this contention. (1) Chapter 1:12—2:26. Wisdom, pleasure, and riches are vanity. (2) Chapters 3:1—5:19. Everything is foreordained; death is preferable to a life that is spent in vain struggle with the foreordained nature of things. Nothing is left but to make the best of the few fleeting years and enjoy them. (3) Chapters 6:1—8:15. Wealth can not overrule providence. Common sense is staggered when

it beholds the inequalities of life. There is no solution; eat, drink, and be merry. (4) Chapters 8:16—12:8. Summing up of the author's findings: "Vanity of vanities, saith the preacher; all is vanity." Therefore let the young man rejoice in his youth, yet not so as to forget his responsibility to his Maker. III. Chapter 12:9-14. The Epilogue—the author's conclusion: (1) Verses 9, 10. The aim of the wise man in committing his meditations to writing has been to communicate his wisdom to others. (2) Verses 11, 12. The reader is urged to heed the sayings of the wise man and be content with the teaching of the book. (3) Verses 13, 14. The one supreme care of man: Fear God and keep His commandments.

The Book of Ecclesiastes is one of the latest books in the Old Testament canon. The ascription to Solomon is, therefore, a literary device, which the author is not careful to maintain.

b. Significance of Ecclesiastes. The author of the Book of Ecclesiastes has passed through many disappointments, and his spirit has grown somewhat skeptical and pessimistic. Everything has proved vanity: riches, pleasure, honor, even the search for wisdom; and he is not sure concerning his destiny after death. But over against his experiences in life there is a faith in God who governs the world. The book, which portrays the struggle between experience and faith, has aptly been called "a cry for light." The author does not see the light clearly, though here and there he may have a glimpse of it. The real perplexity is due to the fact that the author's horizon is bounded by the grave. In this life he sees no hope, therefore he looks with longing for a possible reckoning in an after life; but it remains a hope and cry, it never grows into a conviction. The more significant is the retention of his faith in God. He is conscious of a moral order in the world, though its operation is often frustrated; he is aware of cases in which the God-fearing man had an advantage over others. Hence, with all his uncertainty and

doubt, he holds that it is his duty and the duty of every one else, to fear God and keep His commandments; God somehow will care for the mysteries and perplexities of life.

7. **The Song of Songs.** *a. Different Interpretations.* The Song of Songs, also called Song of Solomon, owes its place in the canon of Sacred Scripture to the allegorical interpretation given to it from the earliest times. The Jews interpreted it as picturing the close relation existing between Jehovah and Israel; the Christians, as picturing the intimate fellowship between Christ and His bride, the Church. At present it is quite generally held that this interpretation does not do justice to the primary purpose of the book; but as to its original purpose two different views are held. According to both interpretations the subject of the book is love, human love; the differences of opinion are with reference to the manner in which the subject is treated. Some think that the book is simply a collection of love or wedding songs, all independent of one another. Others feel that there are too many evidences of real unity in the book to permit this interpretation; they see in the book a didactic drama or melodrama, the aim of the author being the glorification of true human love.

The drama centers around three principal characters: Solomon, the Shunammite maiden, and her shepherd lover. The book relates how the maiden, surprised by the king and his train, was brought to the palace in Jerusalem, where the king hoped to win her affections and to induce her to exchange her rustic home for the enjoyment and honor the court life affords. She has, however, already pledged her heart to a young shepherd; and the admiration and blandishments which the king lavishes upon her are powerless to make her forget him. In the end she is permitted to return to her mountain home, where at the close of the poem the lovers appear hand in hand and express, in warm, glowing words, the superiority of genuine spontaneous affection.

b. The Aim of the Song of Songs. To indicate the aim of the author I can do no better than quote at some length from Professor Rothstein: "The real aim of the Song of Songs," says he, "is to glorify true love, and, more specifically, true betrothed love, which remains steadfast even in the most dangerous and most seductive situations. The author, as we may perhaps assume with certainty, found the material for his work in the story of Abishag of Shunem (1 Kings 1, 2). She remained true to the beloved of her heart, she steadily repelled all the advances of Solomon, into whose harem she had been brought, and finally she triumphed, was conducted home, and restored to her lover perfectly pure. The poem makes two presuppositions—one being that the Shunammite's heart belonged to a youth in her own home, and the other that, meanwhile, against her will, she had been brought into the royal apartments. The dramatical exposition commences at the time when the first meeting of the king with the maiden is close at hand, and actually takes place. The dialogue between the Shunammite and the daughters of Jerusalem (the wives and maidens belonging to the royal harem) in 1:2-8 serves to pave the way, in true dramatic fashion, for that meeting, and at the same time to explain the true inward disposition of the Shunammite toward the approaching royal suitor, which the poet henceforward makes her retain without wavering. If, now, we would understand aright the further structure of the poem, it must be observed that the scheme chosen by the author for the poetical disposition of his material is based upon the different stages in the courtship and the marriage festivities, down to the moment when alone the real victory of loyal love, the preservation of bridely honor in the face of all temptations and assaults, was evidenced, and could be evidenced, namely, the morning after the bridal night passed with the real lover." (Compare Deut. 22:13ff.)

Lesson Outline:

Philosophy among the Hebrews.
The aim and function of the Wise Men.
The growth of the Wisdom movement.
Contents of the Book of Proverbs.
Permanent value of the book.
Speculative wisdom in the Old Testament.
The origin of the Book of Job.
Outline, subject, and teaching of the Book of Job.
Contents and significance of Ecclesiastes.
Different interpretations and aim of the Song of Songs.

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Topics for Special Study:

1. Scope and definition of the term "Wisdom."
2. The sage and the prophet.
3. The teachings of Wisdom and the teaching of Jesus.

Topics for Class Discussion:

1. Characterize Hebrew Wisdom.
2. Discuss the purpose and method of the Wise.
3. Outline the contents of the Book of Proverbs.
4. What do the Proverbs principally deal with?
5. What was the next stage in the development of Wisdom beyond the simple proverb?
6. What gave rise to the problem which forms the subject of the Book of Job?
7. The solutions of the problem proposed in the Book of Job.
8. Discuss the view-point of the author of Ecclesiastes.
9. Give the different interpretations of the Song of Songs.
10. What is the aim of the book?

CHAPTER XII

THE HEBREW PROPHETS TO THE CLOSE OF THE EIGHTH CENTURY B. C.

1. The Nature and Function of Hebrew Prophecy. The Hebrew prophet was a divinely sent messenger, whose duty it was to make known the will and purpose of Jehovah to the chosen people (Amos 3:7, 8. Compare Ex. 4:16; 7:1). While the name *prophet* does not necessarily imply the idea of prediction, the latter is not excluded, for God might desire to make known His will concerning the past, the present, or the future; in the last case the utterance of the prophet must take the form of prediction. It should be noted, however, that the predictive element is not the most important in prophecy, and the prophet was far more a *forth-teller* than a *foreteller.*

2. Moses the First Great Prophet of Israel. The first great Hebrew prophet was Moses. We are accustomed to think of him as a law-giver and author; but his chief glory is rather that he was the first and greatest prophet of the Old Testament dispensation. Moses did two things: (1) He organized the heterogeneous elements that came forth from Egypt into a national unity. (2) He gave to this unity a practical monotheism. In this we see the twofold activity common to all the prophets, national and religious, with the emphasis upon the latter, for the basis of the national union was the recognition of Jehovah as the one God of Israel. Certainly, in the beginning Moses had to do some things which at a later time were assigned to separate officials. In

reality Moses filled a fourfold office: (1) He was a prophet; (2) a priest; (3) a law-giver; (4) a political leader. As such he laid the foundation for the political, social, and religious life of the Hebrews.

3. From Moses to Elijah and Elisha. The records of the period of the Judges mention only two persons as occupying the prophetic office: Deborah, the prophetess (Judges 4:4), and an unnamed prophet (6:8); but toward the close of the period, during the Philistine crisis, the sons of the prophets appeared in great numbers, and under the leadership of Samuel they played an important part in the events culminating in the election of Saul as king over Israel. For a time the prophetic influence continued to make itself felt, but in time Saul, whose lot was cast with the political and military party rather than with the representatives of Jehovah, gave evidence that he was unwilling to abide by the policy of the religious party. Samuel considered this a serious religious danger, and David, a man after God's own heart, who might be expected to follow the prophetic leading, was anointed king. During the next few generations the prophets appear upon the scene but rarely, but Nathan (2 Sam. 12:1ff; 1 Kings 1:11) and Gad (2 Sam. 24:11ff) are worthy successors of Samuel. The next political event of importance was the division of the kingdom, and again the prophets took an active interest. In accord with their general policy, they favored the division (1 Kings 11:29ff; 12:22ff), because they were convinced that a continuation of the policy of Solomon would result in the loss of true religion, and they were willing to sacrifice the State, if only the religion of Jehovah could be saved.

The hopes of the prophets were not fully realized, for the kings of the northern kingdom were by no means all ardent worshipers of Jehovah. In name He continued to be the God of Israel, but the conduct of the kings, who found ready imitators among the people, was not such as to allay the fears of the zealous Jehovah prophets. As a result, con-

flicts between the political and religious parties broke out afresh, which reached their culmination in the days of Ahab (about 875-853). Ahab married Jezebel, the daughter of the king of Tyre, an ardent worshiper of the Baal of Tyre. Since the king took little interest in Jehovah worship, she soon gained many concessions from him which gave a prominent place to her god Baal. The great mass of the people, seeing the indifference of the king, followed the example of her who represented to them by her enthusiasm and zeal the policy of the court, and so did the false prophets, who thought that their personal interests demanded loyalty to the ruling power. To permit the worship of another deity by the side of Jehovah was considered treason by the true prophets. The crisis called forth two great representatives of the God of Israel—Elijah and Elisha—who, each in his own way, boldly and fearlessly carried on the struggle, until they finally succeeded in driving the hated worship from Israel and the faithless dynasty from the throne. Once more the nation came to acnkowledge Jehovah as its one and only God. Succeeding prophets still found it necessary to counteract the tendency to apostatize from Jehovah, but their chief duty was to set in a clearer light the nature and character of Jehovah and His purpose for Israel and mankind.

4. The Literary Prophets and Their Approximate Dates.

I. The eighth-century prophets, or the prophets of the Assyrian period:

1. In Israel—Amos, about 755; Hosea, about 750-735.
   The kings of Israel during this period were Jeroboam II, Zechariah, Shallum, Menahem, Pekahiah, Pekah.

2. In Judah—Isaiah, about 740-700; Micah, about 735 to 700.
   The kings of Judah during this period were Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz, Hezekiah.

II. The seventh-century prophets, or the prophets of the Chaldean period (all in Judah; the northern kingdom fell in 722/721): Jeremiah, about 626-586; Zephaniah, about 626; Nahum, about 608; Habakkuk, about 600.

The kings of Judah were Josiah, Jehoahaz, Jehoiakim, Jehoiachin, Zedekiah.

III. The prophets of the Exile: Ezekiel, 593-570; Obadiah, after 586; Isaiah, 40ff. reflect the historical background of about 545 B. C.

IV. The prophets after the Exile: Haggai, 520; Zechariah (the author of chapters 1—8), 520-518; Malachi, about 450; Joel, about 400; the author or authors of Zechariah 9—14, after 350; Jonah, about 400-250; Daniel, about 168 B. C.

5. The Task of the Eighth-Century Prophets. The early part of the eighth century was a period of extraordinary prosperity for both Israel and Judah; but, as is frequently the case, the material prosperity brought great evils in its train. The prophetic writings of the period make it plain that Jehovah religion was threatened by two serious perils: (1) moral and religious corruption, due to a wrong conception of the character of Jehovah; (2) the successes of the Assyrians, which were to the great mass of people an evidence of the superior strength of the Assyrian deities, and might lead to a transfer of affection and homage from Jehovah to them. Either danger threatened the very life of Jehovah religion. All four eighth-century prophets were convinced that the only remedy was a right conception of the nature and character of their God; and this they proceeded to supply; (1) All emphasized the universality of the Divine sway, and declared that the successes of the Assyrians were not due to Jehovah's weakness, but to the people's sins, which compelled Jehovah to send judgment upon them, and this judgment was to be executed by the Assyrians. (2) They all sought to impress upon the people a more adequate conception of the character of Je-

hovah, each emphasizing that phase of the divine character which he considered best adapted to his day and generation. Amos laid special stress upon the righteousness of Jehovah, Hosea upon His love, Isaiah upon His holiness and majesty, Micah upon the Divine judgments.

a. The Prophet Amos and His Message. Amos was the first of the eighth-century prophets, in chronological order. He was not a prophet by education or profession (7:14), but a herdsman and a "dresser of sycomore trees" (1:1; 7:14). It was while following his daily occupation that the Divine call came to him to leave his home, Tekoa, in Judah, and preach to the northern kingdom, Israel. He left his flocks and sycomore groves and journeyed to Bethel, the religious center in the north. How long he remained there we do not know; 7:10-17 narrates how the chief priest sought to silence him, but in vain; he repeated his message and, when his task was finished, returned to his home, where he may have written down his message or, at least, directed the writing.

One need but read the Books of Amos and Hosea to understand the desperate conditions confronting the prophet. The prosperity, luxury, and extravagance of the rich met the simple herdsman on every hand. The sanctuaries shared in the general prosperity; offerings and tithes were brought regularly and in abundance; people crowded the holy places, and celebrated the sacred feasts with all possible pomp. A nation so prosperous and so zealous in the performance of its religious obligations might well be called blessed. But the prophet was not deceived by the superficial prosperity; he saw the dark side of the nation's life as well. Violence and robbery, oppression of the poor, dishonest trading, graft and bribery, were widespread; the corruption of the courts of justice was notorious; immoralities were practiced without shame; all humane feelings, even in women, seemed to be smothered. With this disregard of all human and divine law there went, strangely enough, a feeling of absolute security and self-righteousness. The great mass of people believed

that, in view of their painstaking observance of the external ceremonial, they had a claim upon the Divine favor and that Jehovah was bound to be with them and protect them from all harm.

The message of Amos was to recall Israel from its apostasy to a life of righteousness and obedience to Jehovah. The Book of Amos falls naturally into three divisions: I. Chapters 1 and 2. The approaching judgment upon six non-Israelitish nations, upon Judah, and upon Israel. II. Chapters 3—6. A series of five discourses of warning and exhortation: (1) Condemnation of the ruling classes (3:1—4:3); (2) Israel's failure to understand the Divine judgments (4:4-13); (3) Address containing lamentations, exhortations, reproofs, and threats of ruin (5:1-17); (4) Darkness and despair of the day of Jehovah (5:18-27); (5) Woe upon the luxurious, the self-confident, and the proud (6:1-14). III. Chapters 7—9. Visions picturing the execution of the judgment, with interludes: (1) Five visions, with explanatory remarks (7:1-9; 8:1-14; 9:1-10); (2) The experiences of Amos at Bethel (7:10-17); (3) Promises of a brighter future (9:11-15).

b. Teaching and Significance of the Message of Amos. In the course of his addresses Amos emphasizes the following aspects of the nature and character of Jehovah: (1) Jehovah is the only true God; (2) He is a person; (3) He is all-powerful; (4) He is everywhere present; (5) He knows all things; (6) He is merciful; (7) above all else he insists that Jehovah is a righteous God, whose favor can be secured only by a life of righteousness. These truths Amos does not discuss in an abstract manner, but in their practical bearing upon the past, present, and future history of Israel; but while he deals primarily with the historical Israel of his age, he gives expression to several religious and moral truths that are of permanent significance. Of these the more important are: (1) Justice between man and man is one of the divine foundations of society; (2) Privilege implies responsibility; (3)

Failure to recognize responsibility will surely bring punishment; (4) Nations and, by analogy, individuals are bound to live up to the measure of light and knowledge granted to them; (5) The most elaborate worship is but an insult to God when offered by those who have no mind to conform to His demands.

c. The Prophet Hosea and His Message. A few years after the withdrawal of Amos from Israel a new prophet arose to continue his work, namely, Hosea. Meanwhile the religious, moral, and social evils had become more aggravated; and during the latter part of his ministry the political situation became worse and worse. After the death of Jeroboam II, about 741, a period of anarchy and lawlessness ensued, which culminated in the fall of the northern kingdom in 722/721. Hosea had one important advantage over his predecessor. Amos was a native of Judah, sent to the northern kingdom on a temporary mission; Hosea was a citizen of the north, bound by a sympathetic patriotism to the kingdom whose destruction he was commissioned to predict.

The Book of Hosea contains the substance of the prophet's earnest and persistent appeals by which he sought to bring the faithless nation back to its divine Master. It falls naturally into two well-marked divisions: chapters 1—3 and 4—14. I. Chapters 1—3. The prophet's marriage, and the application of the story: Jehovah's love and Israel's faithlessness. II. Chapters 4—14. Hosea's prophetic discourses; (1) Awful condition of the people, due to the lack of knowledge of Jehovah, for which lack the priests are responsible (4:1-19); (2) The utter corruption of Israel—the inevitable doom (5:1—8:14); (3) The present rejoicing contrasted with the despair of the Exile (9:1-9); (4) A series of retrospects, showing the utter corruption of Israel (9:10—11:11); (5) A new series of indictments (11:12—12:14); (6) Israel's glory turned to shame (13:1-16); (7) Israel's repentance—God's pardon (14:1-8); followed by an exhortation to study the Book of Hosea (9).

d. The Teaching of Hosea. The message of Hosea was very comprehensive, touching upon the social and political as well as upon the moral and religious situation, and yet the principles underlying his discourses are few and easily discerned. Fundamental is his conception of the nature and character of Jehovah, in which he agrees essentially with Amos; only he lays much greater stress than the latter upon the love of Jehovah; indeed, the conviction that God is love colors all his teaching. Israel, the wife of Jehovah, has proved faithless, but through His love He will win her back to a more intimate fellowship than ever before. The supreme goal of Hosea's aspirations for Israel is not external prosperity, but the re-establishment of a fellowship of life and love with Jehovah; the necessary condition of the enjoyment of this fellowship is sincere, heart-felt repentance, which to Hosea implied all that is essential in the New Testament conception of repentance: recognition that sin is committed against God, a deep sorrow for wrongdoing, and an earnest determination to live henceforth in a manner acceptable to God. Hosea is the first prophet to mention the Messianic King, in whom center the hopes and anticipations of subsequent generations (1:11; 3:5).

e. The Prophet Isaiah and His Message. During the later years of Hosea's activity in Israel, Isaiah, next to Moses the greatest prophet of the Hebrews, began his ministry in Judah. He began to prophesy about 740 and continued until about 700. Without going into details, it may be stated that political, social, moral, and religious conditions in Judah were practically the same as in Israel during the same period, and the age demanded a man of faith, courage, and spiritual insight. The personality of Isaiah was such as to fit him for the mighty tasks before him. He was not a "pale-faced ascetic or a shrinking sentimentalist:" he was a full-blooded man, a man of high mettle, who found it quite consistent with lowliness to pour contempt upon a weak, vacillating king, to fling burning scorn against mocking skeptics, to denounce

falsehood and deceit with words that scorched and blistered. His one outstanding characteristic was strength—strength of character, strength born of intense convictions and of strong and lofty motives. Isaiah is in truth a king among prophets. Isaiah was not, like Amos, Hosea, and his younger contemporary Micah, a man of the country; his home was in Jerusalem, and he appears to have been of high social rank, perhaps a member of the royal family.

Limitation of space will not permit to do more than give a very general outline of Isaiah's message. The book bearing his name may be divided into seven portions of unequal length: I. Chapters 1—12, Prophecies centering around Judah and Israel, coming from different periods of Isaiah's activity and dealing with a variety of subjects. II. Chapters 13—23, Prophecies concerning various foreign nations that came into hostile contact with Israel and Judah. III. Chapters 24—27, Portrayal, in vivid colors, of a great world judgment, and the escape of God's faithful people from its terrors. IV. Chapters 28—33, Group of discourses having for their subject chiefly the relations of Judah with Egypt and Assyria. V. Chapters 34, 35, Contrast between the destiny of Edom and that of Israel. VI. Chapters 36—39, An historical section, dealing chiefly with the activity of Isaiah during the reign of Hezekiah. VII. Chapters 40—66, The restoration of Judah from exile.

f. The Work and Teaching of Isaiah. The key to Isaiah's activity may be found in his inaugural vision, an account of which is contained in the sixth chapter. During that spiritual crisis the following truths were impressed upon the prophet: (1) The holiness of Jehovah; (2) the majesty of Jehovah; (3) the corruption and stubbornness of His contemporaries; (4) the ethical basis of the relation of Jehovah to Israel and the world; (5) the certainty of an awful judgment; (6) the preservation of a remnant; (7) this remnant is to be the seed of a new Israel. With these truths burning in his soul, it is not strange that his standard of living for

himself and his fellows was raised; nor is it surprising that he strove for forty years, in the face of untold obstacles, to lift the nation to the pure heights of his new ideals. With this sublime vision of God he knew no sphere of life where the presence of Jehovah might not be felt or the battle of righteousness might not be fought; and it was his sole ambition to fight this battle until the entire national life should be regenerated, until worship should be so pure, commerce so clean, and politics so honest and unselfish, that all might be offered as a holy and acceptable service to Jehovah.

The broad outlook of Isaiah resulted in a variety of interests and activities. He was a patient and painstaking teacher of religious truth, a bold and fearless preacher of right living, a sane and courageous social reformer, a keen and far-seeing statesman, and a divinely enlightened seer penetrating the veil hiding the future and anticipating the glorious era when the kingdom of God would be established upon earth. As a religious teacher Isaiah sought first of all to impress upon the hearts and minds of his contemporaries a more adequate conception of the nature and character of Jehovah, for he was convinced that the cause of Israel's apostasy was the lack of a true knowledge of Jehovah. While he agrees with the religious conceptions of his predecessors, he gives special emphasis to the two phases of the divine character that were burned into his innermost soul during his inaugural vision, namely, the Divine holiness and majesty. The lofty conception of the character of Jehovah brought with it lofty conceptions of the Divine ideals of righteousness; and as a preacher of right living and a social reformer he endeavored to assist his contemporaries toward realizing these ideals; the nation being morally and socially corrupt, he labored for a transformation of the conditions which meant the certain doom of his people. Moreover, Isaiah was a statesman. A fundamental factor in his attitude as a statesman was his conception of the mission of the nation. He was convinced that back of the nation was God; it was he who formed it, nour-

ished it, and brought it up, who cared for it, who had for it a lofty purpose and mission, and did his utmost to prepare the nation for the carrying out of its divinely appointed task. Since the nation seemed unwilling to carry out the divine purpose, Jehovah must vindicate His holiness and majesty by executing judgment upon the guilty. Again and again Isaiah announces the impending doom of the nation; but he, like the other prophets, looked for the preservation of a righteous remnant which might serve as the nucleus of a new kingdom of God. Over this kingdom the Messianic King, described in glowing colors in 9:1-7 and 11:1-5, will reign as the representative of Jehovah.

g. The Prophet Micah and His Message. A few years after Isaiah entered upon his prophetic career there appeared another prophet in Judah, by the name of Micah. Both cherished lofty conceptions of the character of Jehovah and of the obligations resting upon His people, and both had firmly established convictions concerning the nature and ultimate triumph of the kingdom of God. A comparison of the utterances of the two men also brings out resemblances in style, thought, topic, and even phrases; but the contrast between the two in origin, training, and sphere of activity are equally marked. The one was a city prophet, of high social standing, and the counselor of kings; the other, a simple contryman, born of obscure parentage and in close touch and sympathy with the peasant class.

The Book of Micah falls naturally into three parts, each containing a description of the present corruption, an announcement of imminent judgment, and one or more pictures of a bright and glorious future. The three divisions, each one beginning with "Hear ye," do not represent three connected discourses, but collections of the essential contents of the oral utterances of the prophet during his entire ministry: I. Chapters 1, 2. Judgment upon Samaria and Judah on account of the moral and social corruption of both; the salva-

tion of a remnant. II. Chapters 3—5. Contrast between the present degradation and the future exaltation; the glories of the Messianic age, and the advent of the Messianic King. III. Chapters 6, 7. Jehovah and Israel in controversy; the ultimate settlement.

That the ministry of Micah was not without results is seen from Jeremiah 26: 18, 19, where it is stated that Micah was at least partly responsible for the reformation under Hezekiah. He adds nothing essentially new to the teaching of his predecessors, but in a simple and forceful manner seeks to impress upon his contemporaries the fundamental truths of the religion of Jehovah. In the book bearing his name is found the best definition of prophetic religion: "What doth Jehovah require of thee but to do justly, and to love kindness, and to walk humbly with thy God?"

Never again in the history of the Hebrew people, and one might almost say, never again in the history of the human race, arose within one brief lifetime (755-735 B. C.) four men who left a greater and more permanent impression upon the religious development of the human race than did the four divinely inspired leaders Amos, Hosea, Isaiah, and Micah. They, more than any other set of men during the Old Testament period, were responsible for the preservation and growth of the religion out of which sprang, at a later time, Christianity.

Lesson Outline:

The nature and function of Hebrew prophecy.
Moses as a prophet.
Early prophetic activity.
History of the prophets from the eighth century on.
The task of the eighth-century prophets.
The Prophet Amos and his message.
Hosea and his message.
Isaiah and his message.
Micah and his message.

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Topics for Special Study:

1. The origin and early development of prophecy.
2. The message of Amos.
3. The message of Isaiah.

Topics for Class Discussion:

1. Describe the work of the Hebrew prophet.
2. Give names and tell of the work of the early prophets.
3. Describe the task of the eighth-century prophets.
4. Tell of Amos and his message.
5. What can you say of the life and teaching of Hosea?
6. Discuss the personality, work, and teaching of Isaiah.
7. Give outline of the Book of Micah.

CHAPTER XIII

THE PROPHETS SUBSEQUENT TO THE EIGHTH CENTURY B. C.

1. The Seventh-Century Prophets.

a. The Message of Jeremiah. During the closing years of the seventh century four prophets arose in Judah: Jeremiah, Zephaniah, Nahum, and Habakkuk. Of these Jeremiah was the greatest and enjoyed the longest period of activity. He received his call to the prophetic office in 626, and he continued to prophesy until after the fall of Jerusalem, in 586. The task set before him was not an easy one; for his ministry was to include the nations; nor was it very inspiring, for he was to be pre-eminently a prophet of doom. From 1: 10, which contains the commission of the prophet, to the end of the book, the somber note of judgment predominates. In the prophecies belonging to the earlier period a note of hope is still discernible. Judah may yet repent; if so, the severest blow may be averted. But when the years passed without any improvement in the people, and especially after the accession of Jehoiakim, Jeremiah came to abandon the expectation of any kind of general response on the part of the obdurate nation. He became convinced that Jehovah's patience was exhausted and the time of mercy was past. Justice must have her way, and the result will be terrible judgments upon the people. From the vices of the present and the judgments he expects to fall in the near future, Jeremiah frequently turns to the more remote future, for beyond the night of calamity and distress he sees the dawn of a brighter day. The eternal purpose of the Divine grace must yet be realized. The nation Israel may perish, but the kingdom of God must

endure. Promises of restoration are scattered throughout the entire book, but they are especially numerous in chapters 30 to 33, which have been called a "Book of Consolation." The most important features of the future glory emphasized by Jeremiah are: (1) The salvation of a righteous remnant from the judgment (4:27; 5:10, 18; 29:11; 30:11; 46:28); (2) The restoration of this remnant from exile (3:12, 21, 22; 16:14, 15; chapters 30, 31); (3) The rise of a new Jerusalem, to serve as a dwelling-place of Jehovah and a religious center for the restored exiles (33:16); (4) The advent of the Messianic King, to reign over the redeemed remnant (23:4-6; 30:9, 21); (5) The establishment of a covenant of pardon and grace between the redeemed remnant and Jehovah (31:33, 34; 32:40; 33:8); (6) The presence of Jehovah in the midst of the redeemed people; as a result all external symbols of Jehovah's presence may be removed (3:16); (7) The nations of the earth will turn to Jehovah (3:17; 4:2; 16:19; 33:9).

The prophecies of Jeremiah may be arranged as follows: I. The call of Jeremiah and the first visions of doom (1). II. Judgment upon Judah for its rebellion against Jehovah (2—6). III. Condemnation of the hypocrisy of Judah (7—10). IV. Disregard of Jehovah's will the cause of Judah's overthrow (11, 12). V. The decree of the destruction of Judah is irrevocable (13—20). VI. Condemnation of the faithless rulers (21—25). VII. Conflict of Jeremiah with false prophets (26—29). VIII. Prophecies of the restoration (30—33). IX. The doom of Jerusalem due to the people's faithlessness (34—36). X. The life and times of Jeremiah—chiefly historical (37—45). XI. Prophecies against foreign nations (46—51). XII. An historical appendix (52).

Jeremiah is in perfect accord with his predecessors in all essential points of teaching. Special attention may be called here only to two elements in his teaching, which constitute his most valuable contributions to the body of divine truth: (1) The spirituality of religion. In former days the national

aspect of religion was emphasized, and this naturally gave a large place to forms and institutions which might be national in their use and benefits. Jeremiah saw that the national life of Judah was rapidly nearing its close, and with it would disappear the Holy City, the temple, and other institutions that were closely bound up with the religious life of the past. Religion, to prepare for this crisis, must be denationalized; it must be individualized and spiritualized. This need Jeremiah proceeded to supply; and again and again he insists that religion is an immediate, personal relationship between Jehovah and the individual soul, and heart obedience and devotion of the individual to his God (31:33, 34; 32:40; 33:8). (2) Personal responsibility. The individualization of religion implies the doctrine of personal responsibility. With the sense of individuality lost, persons might think that they were punished for the sins of others, sins committed by some of their contemporaries or ancestors (31:29). Conscious personal fellowship with God involves a deeper sense of individual responsibility. Men will begin to realize that every one is responsible for his own conduct (31:30).

b. The Message of Zephaniah. The earliest of Jeremiah's contemporaries was Zephaniah. The occasion of his prophesying seems to have been the threatening advance of the Scythians, a horde of barbarians, who overran Western Asia during the latter half of the seventh century B. C. The prophet considered the Scythians the executioners of a Divine judgment upon his sinful countrymen and the surrounding nations. Repentance offers the only way of escape; those who do not repent will be destroyed, those who return to Jehovah will be exalted and glorified. The greater part of the book (1:2—3:7) is given up to threats and denunciations, with few indications of hope; the closing section, 3:8-20, contains a promise of salvation and exaltation to those who repent.

Zephaniah adds little that is new to the teaching of his predecessors, but he attempts with much moral and spiritual fervor to impress upon his contemporaries the fundamental

truths of the religion of Jehovah. Especially notable is his emphasis upon the "Day of Jehovah," the great day of battle when Jehovah was expected to manifest himself in the destruction of all his foes and the exaltation of the faithful. The vision of Zephaniah is world-wide; the judgment will fall upon all nations, and from all parts of the world converts will be won to Jehovah; and these may worship Him, "every one from his place."

c. The Message of Nahum. Nahum differs from his predecessors in his silence concerning the sin and guilt of Judah. The other prophets point to present or impending distress or affliction as punishment for sin, and they insist that salvation can come only if the people repent and turn to Jehovah. The theme of Nahum is the fall and destruction of Nineveh, the capital of Assyria, the long-time oppressor of the Hebrews. Judah had suffered much from the proud Assyrian, and it is not difficult to understand how, with the doom of the cruel oppressor imminent a prophet-patriot might burst into shouts of exultation and triumph over the distress of the cruel foe, for the downfall of the enemy will make possible the exaltation of the people of Jehovah. Chapter 1 contains the decree of Nineveh's doom because the city has devised evil against Jehovah. Chapters 2 and 3 describe, in forceful and picturesque language, the siege, capture, and destruction of the city.

The utterances of Nahum contain little direct religious teaching; and what there is of it is confined very largely to the opening verses of Chapter 1, where the twofold manifestation of the Divine holiness—the Divine vengeance and the Divine mercy—is emphasized (1:2, 3). The manifestation of the one results in the destruction of the wicked (1:2), the other in the salvation of the oppressed (1:15; 2:2). Faith in Jehovah will secure the Divine favor and protection. Indirectly the message of Nahum, by its emphasis of the sway of Jehovah over the whole universe and the duty of all to own this sway, is of profound eternal signficance. "Assyria in Nahum's hands becomes an object lesson to the empires of the modern world, teaching, as an eternal principle of the

divine government of the world, the absolute necessity, for a nation's continued vitality, of that righteousness, personal, civic, and national, which alone exalteth a nation."

d. The Message of Habakkuk. In the Book of Habakkuk a new type of prophecy appears. The prophets were primarily preachers and teachers of religion and ethics. They addressed themselves to their fellow countrymen in an attempt to win them back to Jehovah and a righteous life. Not so Habakkuk. He addresses himself to Jehovah, questioning the justice and even the reality of the Divine providence. The prophet is perplexed, for he can not harmonize the seeming indifference of Jehovah in the presence of wide-spread corruption with his conception of the Divine character (1:2-4). In reply Jehovah declares that judgment is about to be executed by the Chaldeans (1:5-11). The answer raises another problem: How can a holy God use the godless Chaldeans as instruments? To which Jehovah replies: The Chaldeans, though temporarily exalted, will meet certain doom; the righteous, though temporarily afflicted, will live forever (1:12—2:5). There follows a taunt-song over the downfall of the Babylonians (2:6-20), and the "prayer" of Habakkuk (chapter 3).

The message of Habakkuk suggests several valuable lessons: (1) The proper attitude amid perplexing problems; (2) the universal supremacy of Jehovah; (3) faith, or faithfulness, is a guarantee of permanency and life.

2. The Prophets of the Exile.

a. The Message of Obadiah. The historical references and allusions in Obadiah 11—14 suggest that the message originated soon after the fall of Jerusalem, in 586 B. C. The message is called forth by the hostility of the Edomites toward the Jews on that occasion. The prophet announces the destruction of Edom (1—9), because of its hostility and cruelty toward Judah (10—16), and the subsequent exaltation of the Jews (17—21). Among the fundamental beliefs underlying the message are the following: (1) Jehovah has a special interest in Israel. (2) He will establish a new

kingdom of God, with Judah and Jerusalem as the center. (3) Holiness will be the chief characteristic of this kingdom.

b. The Message of Ezekiel. In 597 King Jehoiachin and about ten thousand of the better class of Jews were carried into captivity to Babylonia. Among these exiles was Ezekiel. In the fifth year of his exile he entered upon his prophetic work. From 593 to 586 Ezekiel devoted himself almost exclusively to combating the false hopes of a speedy restoration entertained by many, both in Jerusalem and in exile. During this period denunciations and threats predominate. When his predictions of the fall of Jerusalem were fulfilled, a great change came over the popular attitude; henceforth Ezekiel enjoyed the veneration of all the Jews in Babylon. His message also assumed a different aspect, for he now dwelt more and more upon the coming restoration. His glowing words kept alive the hope of the people, based upon earlier prophecies, and at the same time tended to bring the whole people into a more vital relation with their God.

The Book of Ezekiel consists of three main divisions: I. Chapters 1—24, The sin and punishment of Judah: 1. The prophet's call and initiation (1:1—3:21); 2. Utterances and symbolical actions announcing the impending fall of Judah and Jerusalem (3:22—7:27); 3. Visions of the corruption and doom of Jerusalem; Jehovah's departure from the Holy City (8—11); 4. Discourses and symbolical acts portraying the people's sin and doom (12—19); 5. The doom of Judah and Jerusalem (20—24). II. Chapters 25—32, Judgments upon foreign nations. These judgments will fall (1) to prevent the nations from troubling the restored Israel, (2) to remove the evil influences which had sprung from the people's contact with their heathen neighbors in the past. III. Chapters 33—48, Prophecies of the restoration: 1. The manner in which Jehovah will restore His people to the promised land (33—39). 2. The constitution upon which the life of the restored community is to be organized (40—48).

The preservation of Israel's religion in exile was almost

entirely due to the service rendered by Ezekiel. The more important aspects of his work are: 1. Denunciation of Judah's sins and announcement of doom (1—24). 2. Repentance the condition of salvation (18:30-32); 3. Promises of restoration (11:16ff; 16:60ff; 27:22-24; 20:40ff; 33—48). Concerning the future restoration and exaltation he says: (1) It will be preceded by judgments upon the nations (25—32; 38; 39); (2) The land will be endowed with extraordinary fertility (36:8, 9, 29, 30, 34, 35); (3) The exiles will be prepared for the return by a moral and spiritual regeneration (36:25-27); (4) The regenerated exiles will be brought back (37:1-14); (5) Over the restored exiles the Messianic King will reign (34:11-24; 37:22ff); (6) Jehovah will return to the redeemed people, to abide with them forever (37:26, 27; 43:1-12); (7) The restored people will be organized as a theocracy (40—48). In his conception of Jehovah's nature and character Ezekiel agrees fully with his predecessors, calling special attention to the Divine majesty (1, 10, 43) and holiness, and Jehovah's desire that all nations should know Him in His fullness (20:41; 28:22, 25; 36:23; 38:16, 23). He also emphasizes and expands the doctrine of the freedom and responsibility of the individual soul before God, which was first taught by Jeremiah (18:20-32). In one respect Ezekiel differs from his predecessors, namely, in the high estimate he places upon the externals of religion (40—48), but he is by no means a formalist, as may be seen from the profound and noble utterances touching the necessity of a new heart (18:31; 36:26) and a new spirit (11:19).

c. The Message of Isaiah, Chapters 40 to 66. Whoever may have been the author of these chapters, it is universally admitted that they are written from the standpoint of the Babylonian exile, and that, therefore, they must be interpreted from that standpoint. The all-pervading note is consolation, for the author means to revive the drooping spirit of the exiles and prepare them for the restoration which he considers imminent. The chapters may be arranged in three

groups: I. Chapters 40—48, the deliverance and restoration of the exiles through the instrumentality of Cyrus. To give emphasis to his promises, the prophet calls attention again and again to the mighty power of Jehovah, which enables him to carry out his purpose in the face of all obstacles. II. Chapters 49—55, the mission of the servant of Jehovah and the glorification of Zion. The prophet is concerned in these chapters largely with the moral and spiritual transformation of the exiles and their exaltation after the restoration. III. Chapters 56—66, the future blessedness of the true Israel and the doom of the apostates.

In many respects these chapters constitute 'the most brilliant jewel of prophetic literature." In the first place, the prophet never wearies of emphasizing the fact that Jehovah alone is God (40:18-20; 41:29; 43:9ff; 44:8-20). This one God is all-powerful and supreme over all (40:12, 22, 23, 28; 41:2, 25; 43:12; 44:28; 45:1-3); He is also a righteous and holy God (41:10, 14; 42:6; 43:14; 45:13, 19, 23; 46:13; 47:4; 48:17; 49:7; 51:5, 6, 8; 54:5; 55:5; 56:1; 60:9, 14); a God of majesty and power, whose eternal purpose is to make Himself known to men (40:5; 43:7-25; 48:9-11; etc.). Israel has been chosen to aid God in the carrying out of this purpose of grace and good-will (40—53); and when the servant of Jehovah has performed his task he will be highly exalted; the glories of this exaltation are vividly portrayed in chapters 56—66.

3. The Prophets after the Exile.

a. The Message of Haggai and Zechariah. Babylon fell into the hands of Cyrus in 538; and soon after he gave permission to the Jews to return to their old home. In the spring of 537 a large company took advantage of this permission, and immediately on their arrival in Jerusalem they set up the altar of burnt offerings and laid the foundation of the temple (Ezra 3:2ff). However, the first enthusiasm soon grew cold, and when in 520 the two prophets Haggai and Zechariah appeared, they found building operations at a

standstill. They recognized the importance of the temple as a religious center; hence, from beginning to end their message centers around the rebuilding of the house of God. Their preaching produced results, and in 516 the temple was completed and dedicated.

The Book of Haggai contains four separate utterances: I. Rebuke of religious indifference, exhortation to resume building operations (1:1-11); II. Message of encouragement to the builders (2:1-9); III. The completion of the temple a sure guarantee of the return of the divine favor (2:10-19); IV. Exaltation of Zerubbabel, the servant of Jehovah (2:20-23). Chapter 1:12-15 is an historical section, describing the effects of the first discourse. The Book of Zechariah opens with a call to repentance (1:1-6). Then follow eight night-visions (1:7—6:8), all serving a common purpose, "the encouragement of the Jews to continue the work of restoring the temple and rebuilding the city, and the re-establishing of the theocratic government:" 1. The angelic horsemen (1:7-17); 2. The four horns and the four smiths (1:18-21); 3. The man with the measuring line (2:1-13); 4. The trial of the high priest (3); 5. The golden candlestick and the two olive trees (4); 6. The flying roll (5:1-4); 7. The woman in the ephah (5:5-11); 8. The four chariots with horses of different colors (6:1-8). In 6:9-15 is an account of a symbolical act, the crowning of the high priest Joshua. In chapters 7 and 8 the prophet points out the essential elements of Jehovah religion and promises the speedy exaltation of the Jews. Chapters 9—14 contain a series of utterances, loosely connected, dealing for the most part with the events leading up to the final triumph of the kingdom of God. The two prophets do not contribute any new elements of truth; they simply desire to enforce the truths taught by the earlier prophets and adapt them to changed conditions. However, Zechariah differs from his predecessors in three points: (1) in the emphasis he places upon visions as a means of divine communication; (2) in the apocalyptic symbolism that enters into the visions; (3) in the large place

occupied by angelic mediation in his intercourse with Jehovah.

b. The Message of Malachi. The ministry of Malachi is connected with the reform movement under Ezra and Nehemiah. The fundamental evil of the day was religious indifference and skepticism, due, on the one hand, to disappointment over the non-fulfillment of earlier prophecies. The exilic and pre-exilic prophets had painted the glories of the restoration in the brighest colors, but the reality was far inferior to the ideal. On the other hand, the apparent inequalities of life caused many to ask, Where is the God of justice? (2:17.) This skepticism soon showed itself in the life and conduct of the people; the outstanding wrongs being the faithlessness of the priests and the neglect of the temple service by the people, divorces, the marrying of foreign women, the non-payment of the tithes, and various forms of oppression. Like Ezra and Nehemiah, Malachi sought with all his might to counteract these evils.

Five divisions may be recognized in the Book of Malachi: I. The love of Jehovah for Israel (1:2-5). This forms the basis of all subsequent appeals. The love of Jehovah for Israel, the prophet thinks, should be the motive and model for Israel's attitude toward Him. II. The faithlessness of priests and people, and their punishment if they fail to repent (1:6—2:9). III. Condemnation of mixed marriages and divorces (2:10-16). IV. Condemnation of the spirit of indifference and skepticism, which was the root of all the religious and moral corruption denounced in the rest of the book (3:17 to 4:3). V. Exhortation to obey the law of Moses (4:4-6).

c. The Message of Joel. Joel prophesied a little later than Malachi. The occasion of his utterance appears to have been a threefold calamity: locusts (1:4), drought (1:16-18), and conflagrations (1:19, 20). These calamities were to him indications that the day of reckoning was at hand; and he pleads most earnestly and persistently for repentance

that his contemporaries may escape the terrors of that day. The Book of Joel falls naturally into two parts, each one capable of subdivisions. In the first (1:1—2:17) judgment receives special emphasis; in the second (2:18—3:21) the thought of restoration and blessing predominates: I. Description of the plague which occasions the prophecy (1:1-20; II. The plague the harbinger of the day of Jehovah (2:1-17); III. Restoration of the divine favor (2:18-32); IV. Destruction of the nations and exaltation of the Jews (3:1-21). The most significant feature in Joel's teaching is his promise of the outpouring of the divine spirit (2:28, 29), which began to be fulfilled on the day of Pentecost, and since then has been and is being fulfilled with ever-increasing fullness and in a manner far superior to the expectation of our prophet.

d. The Message of Jonah. The Book of Jonah differs from the other books called prophetic by the Jews. All the others record chiefly prophetic utterances, though sometimes embodying brief narratives of events; the Book of Jonah, on the other hand, records a prophet's work and experiences, giving little space to his utterances. And yet it is classed among the prophetic books because, whatever historical material it may embody, its purpose is primarily not historical, but prophetic. In other words, it was not written to give information concerning the prophet Jonah, but, as the product of a prophetic mind, for the purpose of teaching, by means of the narrative, a great prophetic truth.

The book narrates certain incidents connected with Jonah's commission to preach in Nineveh: I. Jonah's commission, disobedience, and punishment (1:1-16); II. Jonah's prayer and deliverance (1:17—2:10); III. Jonah's preaching in Nineveh and its effects (3); IV. Jonah's complaint and rebuke by Jehovah. The central truth taught in the narrative is the universality of the Divine plan of redemption. Nowhere else in the Old Testament is such continued stress laid upon the Fatherhood of God, embracing in its infinite

love the whole human race; indeed, the Book of Jonah is the most "Christian" of all Old Testament books.

e. The Message of Daniel. The Book of Daniel belongs to the apocalyptic literature. Like the prophet, the apocalyptic writer seeks to set forth the character, will, and purpose of God, as also the laws of His kingdom. But "prophecy still believes that this world is God's world, and that in this world His goodness and truth will yet be justified. Hence the prophet addressed himself chiefly to the present and its concerns, and when he addresses himself to the future, his prophecy springs naturally from the present, and the future which he depicts is regarded as in organic connection with it. The apocalyptic writer, on the other hand, almost wholly despairs of the present; his main interests are supramundane."

The Book of Daniel falls naturally into two parts: I. Chapters 1—6, The History of Daniel: 1. Daniel's youth and education (1); 2. The dream of the image, and its significance (2); 3. Faithfulness of Daniel's companions, and their deliverance from the fiery furnace (3); 4. Nebuchadnezzar's tree-dream, and its fulfillment (4); 5. The feast of Belshazzar, and the handwriting on the wall (5); 6. Daniel's fidelity, and his deliverance from the lions' den (6); II. Chapters 7—12, The Visions of Daniel: 1. The vision of the four beasts, and its interpretation (7); 2. The ram and the he-goat (8); 3. Daniel's prayer, and the Divine answer (9); 4. The ultimate triumph of the kingdom of God (10 to 12).

The principal idea of the Book of Daniel is the ultimate triumph of the kingdom of God. "It tells in plainer language than had been used before, of the subjection of the world to God, and indicates clearly the evidence of the Divine rule, and assures us that the progress of God's kingdom is absolutely irresistible, and that all things will be ultimately brought into submission to God." As compared with other prophetic books, Daniel marks an advance in its teaching (1) concerning angels, (2) concerning a resurrection from the dead.

4. Jesus and the Prophets. The voice of Hebrew prophecy was finally silenced, but the truth proclaimed throughout the centuries continued to live; and when Jesus, the great Prophet of Nazareth, appeared, He gathered up from His predecessors all that was permanent and divine, and, quickening it by His own mighty personality, He sent it down the ages until by its life-giving power it should quicken all men and make them friends of God and prophets.

Lesson Outline:

The message of Jeremiah.
The message of Zephaniah.
The message of Nahum.
The message of Habakkuk.
The message of Obadiah.
The message of Ezekiel.
The message of Isaiah, Chapters 40—66.
The message of Haggai and Zachariah.
The message of Malachi.
The message of Joel.
The message of Jonah.
The message of Daniel.

Bibliography:

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Commentaries: "Jeremiah," Brown; "Ezekiel," Davidson; "Daniel," Driver; "The Minor Prophets," Eiselen.

Topics for Special Study:

1. The distinctive message of Jeremiah.
2. The term "servant of Jehovah."

Topics for Class Discussion:

1. State the occasion and contents of the message of Jeremiah.
2. The distinctive contributions of Jeremiah to divine truth.
3. Tell of the occasion and character of the work of Zephaniah.
4. The distinctive message of Nahum.
5. The new type of prophetic message of Habakkuk.
6. What were the fundamental beliefs of Obadiah?
7. State the occasion, contents, and teaching of the message of Ezekiel.
8. Characterize Isaiah 40—66.

PART III

THE NEW TESTAMENT

By W. C. Barclay

Philip of Macedon (382-336) subdued Greece, father of Alexander the Great

(350(?)-280 B.C.) established monarchy in Syria

Members of dynasty that ruled Syria 312 B.C. till Roman conquest 64 B.C. named from Seleucus, a general of Alexander the Great, founder of the dynasty.

CHAPTER XIV

NEW TESTAMENT TIMES

To pass from the Old Testament to the New is like passing from one country to another. One realizes that he is in the same world, yet all about him wears a changed aspect. Between the latest utterance of the Old Testament and the earliest of the New a period of at least two centuries intervened. These were not idle years. During every decade significant history was being made. Before taking up our study of the New Testament it is necessary, therefore, to take note of these changes as they affected the Jewish people, and also to glance in its broad outlines at the national, social, and religious situation, of which Jesus was the most significant factor and out of which our New Testament came as a priceless gift to succeeding ages.

I. Government Preceding the Christian Era.

1. *The Maccabean Period* (168 B. C. to 63 B. C.). The period receives its name from Judas Maccabeus, the most illustrious of a remarkable family of Jewish patriots which furnished a series of leaders in a prolonged struggle for religious and political freedom.

The Land of Israel became a part of the empire of Alexander in 332 B. C. For a hundred years after his death it was a bone of contention between Egypt and Syria until Antiochus III, of Syria, more successful than his predecessors, after protracted war incorporated it in the Syrian Kingdom of the Seleucidæ. A long-continued attempt to Hellenize the people culminated in the effort of Antiochus

Epiphanes (175-164 B. C.) to absolutely destroy Judaism. The law was abolished, Sabbath worship and the rite of circumcision were prohibited, the temple was partially destroyed, pagan ceremonies were performed in it, and on the sacred altar of burnt offering a heathen altar to Jupiter was erected. Under merciless persecution many of the inhabitants fled, but finally Judas Maccabeus became the leader of a loyal Jewish band which defended Israel's sacred institutions with the sword. The struggle began in 168 B. C.; by 165 B. C. victory had so far been gained that the temple was rededicated, and in 142 B. C. Judea achieved political independence. There followed a period of uncertain political independence, characterized by internal intrigue, discord, and strife, which continued until 63 B. C. Our principal sources of information concerning these troubled times are I. and II. Maccabees (apocryphal books of Scripture) and Josephus, the Jewish historian.

2. *The Roman Period* (beginning 63 B. C.) may be said to have extended to 70 A. D., the destruction of Jerusalem. In 63 B. C. the Roman general, Pompey, appealed to by both sides in a civil war, made an expedition into Judea, turned the rôle of peacemaker into that of conqueror, besieged and entered the temple, and made the whole country tributary to Rome. By this conquest Jewish independence was forever lost. The Jewish territory was parceled out to dependents of Rome, and Judea was constituted an insignificant province of the empire. In 37 B. C., Herod the Great was appointed king by the emperor, and by successful warfare extended his borders to include much more than Judea. He was an unscrupulous and arbitrary ruler, in whose acts murderous cruelty and systematic charity were strangely combined. His claim to greatness was based upon unusual physical vigor, wide learning, and fondness for Grecian and Roman art and architecture. Among the victims of the insane jealousy and wrath of his later years were his own wife and three of his sons. By the terror of his rule he was

able to preserve such internal peace as the land had not known for many years. He was a great builder and sought to make peace with his subjects by rebuilding the temple at Jerusalem on a scale of unequaled size and splendor. Herod died in 4 A. D.

II. Physical and Political Geography of Palestine.

By our study of the Old Testament we are already familiar with the Land of Israel. Because it was His country, Christians speak of it as the Holy Land. A common modern name is Palestine.

In the time of our Lord the following were recognized as the divisions of the country: 1. Judea; 2. Samaria; 3. Galilee; 4. Decapolis; 5. Perea.

1. *Judea lay farthest south.* It extended from the Mediterranean Sea east to the Jordan River and the Dead Sea On the south it was bordered by the desert. To the southeast was Idumea or Edom. Judea was a small territory, crossed from north to south by a mountainous plateau, interrupted by peaks, rocky hills, dry water-courses, and occasional valleys—a land of rocks, dwarfed trees, little water, and scanty soil. On the east this plateau declined sharply to the Jordan, which, at its mouth, lay far below the level of the ocean. To the west there was a series of valleys, and then a range of low hills which bordered the narrow maritime plain. The central plateau sloped gradually to the southern desert.

2. *Directly north of Judea was Samaria,* extending from the Mediterranean Sea to the Jordan River. Samaria was more open than Judea, with less pronounced contrasts of soil and climate, and with a larger area of tillable soil. These natural advantages rendered the land more accessible to invaders, and its people more hospitable to foreign influences. To the northwest the great plain of Esdraelon stretched out to the sea, a plain of wonderful fertility, with deep, rich soil which yielded abundant harvests. It opened a natural road-

way from the Mediterranean to the Jordan. On it some of the greatest battles of the world's history were fought.

3. *Immediately to the north was Galilee.* It was bounded on the west by the territory of Tyre, a Gentile region; on the north by the river Leontes, and on the east by the Jordan and the Sea of Galilee. Its length north and south was sixty miles, its breadth about thirty miles; yet in this small area it had all the variety of mountain, plain, and valley. It was more generously watered than Judea, hence more fertile and with more abundant growth of vegetation and trees.

4. *To the east and north of the Sea of Galilee was a region difficult to name.* The population was more Gentile than Jewish. There were a number of small States, as Iturea, Gaulanitis, Batanea, Trachonitis, and others, which played an inconspicuous part in the history of the time. The region was sometimes spoken of as Decapolis, the word meaning ten cities, and referring to ten Greek cities which were leagued together in a more or less close commercial and political unity.

5. *The district to the south of Decapolis,* bordering the Jordan and the Dead Sea, was *Perea,* a narrow strip wedged between the river on the west and the desert of Arabia on the east. The New Testament never uses the name Perea, but uniformly designates the region, "beyond the Jordan."

III. The Government During the Lifetime of Jesus.

From 63 B. C., as we have seen, Palestine was under the dominion of Rome. When Jesus was born Herod the Great was ruler over all the territory named above, with the title of king. Herod died in B. C. 4, and his territory was divided between three of his sons: Herod Antipas was made tetrarch of Galilee and Perea; Herod Philip was given rule over a number of small States in the region of the Decapolis, and had the same title; Judea, Samaria, and Idumea were allotted to Archelaus, but in A. D. 6 he was removed by the emperor for misrule, and these three districts were constituted the

imperial province of Judea, a province of the second rank, under a procurator who had the command of the army, was the final resort in legal procedure, and supervised the collection of customs and taxes. Of the earlier procurators the names are scarcely known. In A. D. 26 Pontius Pilate was appointed and held office until he was deposed in A. D. 36.

The Roman government exacted taxes of two sorts from the Jews. The direct taxes, consisting of a land tax and a poll tax, were collected by salaried officials. The customs, or indirect taxes, were assessed on exports, and were collected by men who had bought the right, and their representatives. Both the chief collectors and their hirelings are called publicans in the New Testament. Because of their relation to Rome they were much despised by loyal Jews. The system readily lent itself to abuse, and most of the publicans were extortioners and thoroughly unscrupulous.

The highest Jewish court of justice was the Sanhedrin. It had jurisdiction only within Judea, but its influence extended to Galilee and among Jews everywhere. It took cognizance of all that affected Jewish interests, and in cases of justice its judgment was final except in capital cases; the power to sentence to death was in the hands of the procurator alone. The Sanhedrin had seventy-one members, "elders," from the ranks of the priestly aristocracy, and from the scribes. The high priest was president.

IV. Political and Religious Parties.

The Pharisees. There were certain influential parties among the Jews in the time of Jesus. First in number and importance were the Pharisees, who were highly regarded by the common people. In their origin they were a religious fraternity, the successors of "the Pious," or Hasideans, who, after the return from the exile, insisted on absolute separation from all that was heathen, cherished an unbounded zeal for the law, fostered the development of that mass of scribal explanations of and decisions upon the law known as the oral

law, or traditions, and with intense zeal opposed all foreign influences. The Pharisees first came into notice during the time of the Maccabees; they were early characterized by religious zeal and a punctilious endeavor to perfectly obey the law, both written and oral, in all its details. In the time of Jesus their earnest spirit had degenerated into spiritual pride and empty formalism. Their religion was of the letter, and the living God had no place in their lives or their thought. So far as they held a hope of a Messiah it was that God would send a deliverer unexpectedly and in mysterious and apocalyptic fashion.

The Sadducees. The Sadducees were more a political than a religious party. Representing long-latent tendencies existent among the Jewish people, they first became an organized party in the time of the Maccabees. Their chief interest concerned the building-up of the Jewish State. Through prominence in political affairs they had come into contact with foreign ideas, many of which they welcomed. These generated a worldly spirit. They amassed wealth and were recognized as of the aristocratic class. They honored the law of Moses, but denied the binding force of the oral law. They denied the doctrine of the resurrection of the body and the existence of angels and spirits. Their opposition to Jesus was not so pronounced as that of the Pharisees until near the close of His ministry, when He came into sharp conflict with them. Strange to say, the Sadducees, though utterly secular in spirit, were closely allied to the priestly party. Many of the priests were Sadducees. Thus it may be realized how entirely vain many of the rites and ceremonies of the temple service must have been.

The Zealots. The Zealots embodied the passionate hatred of and resistance to the foreign rule. They were ready to take advantage of the least opportunity to use the sword, and hoped by means of revolution to set up the kingdom of God. Their hope of a Messiah was political; He would be the chosen instrument of God to overthrow all of Israel's enemies

and usher in the golden era of God's chosen people. They were impetuous, hot-headed enthusiasts, intensely religious. Simon, the Canaanite, came from the Zealot ranks into the apostolic company.

The Pious. There were doubtless among the people of Jesus' day many devout, earnest souls, who, living humble, patient, loving, faithful lives, awaited in calm, confident expectation the "Consolation of Israel." We have acquaintance with some such, as Simeon, Anna, Zachariah, Elizabeth, Joseph, and Mary; these and others like them were the holy remnant, the representatives in her day of visitation, of Israel's most precious heritage, a spiritual, pure, and undefiled religion. From this company came most of those who responded to Jesus' call and became charter members of the Christian Church.

The Samaritans. This people, inhabitants of Samaria, though occupying Jewish territory, must be sharply distinguished from the Jews. They were a mixed race, descendents of colonists brought into the country by the Assyrians at the time of the captivity of the ten tribes and later. These had intermarried with Jews left in the land. When the Jews of the captivity returned, from reasons of religious exclusiveness they refused to intermingle or have any dealings with the Samaritans, and a mutual enmity sprang up which persisted to New Testament times. Their worship, similar to that of the Jews, had its center on Mt. Gerizim, where a temple was built in the time of Nehemiah. Little is accurately known concerning their religion beyond their claim that Mt. Gerizim was the chosen place of God for His temple, the similarity of their rites and sacrifices to those of the Jews, and their belief that a Messiah was to come.

V. Religious and Social Conditions of the Epoch.

In the time of Jesus *the temple* was still ideally the center of the Jewish religion. Herod's Temple, replacing that of Zerubbabel, although begun about 20 B. C., was not com-

pletely finished until 62 A. D., only eight years before its final destruction. The temple was the scene of daily sacrifices, in the celebration of which thousands of priests engaged in the course of a year, and of prayer and worship. On the great feast days, when multitudes of Jews came up to Jerusalem from all parts of the world, it was the center of special services. Thus the temple had a prominent place in the religious life of every loyal Jew.

Synagogues were numerous. Every community of any considerable size had its synagogue. This institution of later Judaism was called into existence during the exile, when the Jews were far separated from the temple. On the return it was continued and became, to a large extent, the real center of the religious life of the people. In every place it gave the opportunity for religious services and for instruction. The local synagogue was under the control of the elders; its chief officer was the ruler, who was in direct charge; the minister had the care of the building and its furnishings, administered discipline, and instructed the children; two other officers were receivers of alms. Services were held regularly on Sabbath and on feast days; and in some synagogues, where a congregation was assured, daily. No service could be held without the presence of at least ten men. Women were privileged to attend, but were not counted as members of the congregation. The service consisted of public prayer offered by a designated leader; the reading, first, from the Pentateuch, then from the Prophets; the translation of the lessons from Hebrew into Aramaic, the common speech of the people; and finally by a sermon, generally an exposition of the lesson. The synagogue also served as an elementary school; in it children were regularly instructed in the Scriptures.

The home life of the Jewish people was the nearest approach to ideal that the ancient world presented. It was strongly pervaded by religion. The sacred law was revered; little boxes containing pieces of parchment, on which were

written the words of Deuteronomy 6:4-9, and 11:13-21, were fastened to the door-post. The Sabbath was severely guarded. Ceremonial purity was insisted upon, including the distinctions between clean and unclean food, and the details concerning the times and ways of fasting and the wearing of fringes and phylacteries were minutely observed. Without doubt these ceremonies were with many only a lifeless form. Back of these petty and wearisome details were ideals and customs of great significance and worth. Life was regarded with seriousness, the name of Jehovah was reverenced, and a sincere desire and purpose existed to fear, honor, and serve Him.

Children were held in high regard; destruction of infants, so common among most Gentile peoples, was unknown; to be childless was regarded a reproach. Children were carefully instructed in religion, compelled to memorize long sections of the law, and made familiar with the nation's history. Woman held an honorable position. Manual labor was never despised; every son was caused to learn a trade. The masses of the people were poor, and their income very small. The houses were mostly small—usually with one or two square rooms, opening frequently on a square court—and roofed over with thatch. The furniture was simple: a couch or mat for sleeping, and a few cooking utensils; this was about all, except in the houses of the rich. Pictures and statuary were not used, because forbidden by the law (Ex. 20:4). The houses were grouped together in villages and towns, from which the shepherds and those who tilled the soil went out to their daily work in the fields.

Lesson Outline:

Government preceding the Christian era: The Maccabean period; the Roman period.
Physical and political geography of Palestine.
The government during the lifetime of Jesus.
Political and religious parties.
Religious and social conditions.

Books for Reference:

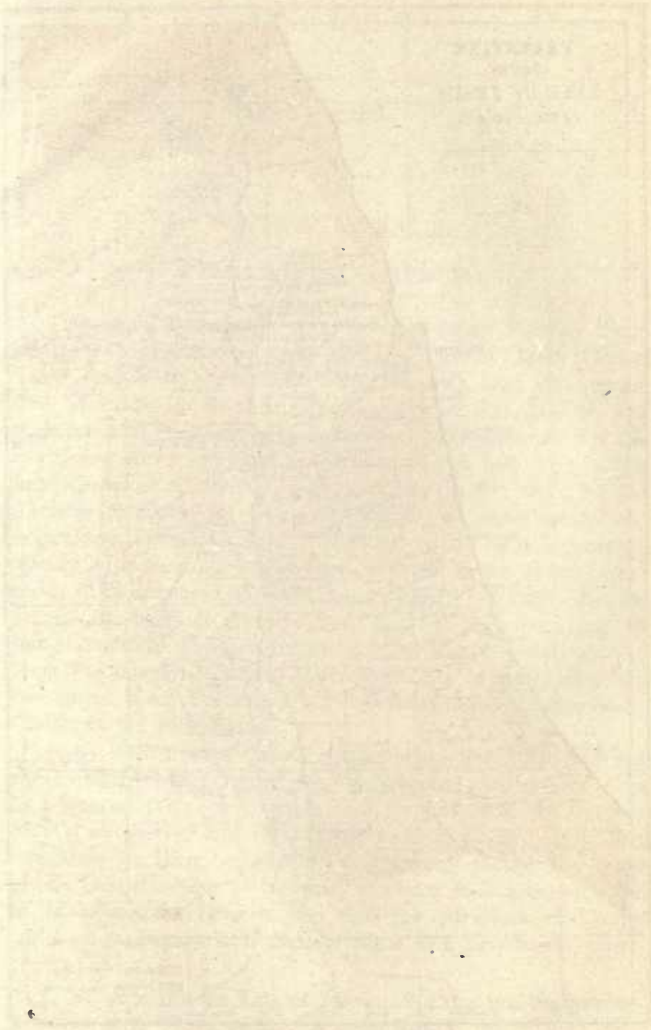
Waddy-Moss, "From Malachi to Matthew."
Riggs, "History of the Jewish People During the Maccabean and Roman Periods."
Hastings, "One Volume Bible Dictionary."
Mathews, "The Messianic Hope."

Topics for Special Study:

1. The development of the ideas of the Messiah.
2. The history and tenets of the Pharisees.
3. The life of Herod the Great.
4. The history and the people of Galilee.
5. Judaism as a religion.

Topics for Class Discussion:

1. What is the explanation of the numerous political changes in Palestine?
2. Why did Jesus so severely condemn the Pharisees?
3. What was the distinguishing difference between the Pharisees and the Sadducees?
4. What were the chief religious institutions in the time of Jesus?
5. Why were the publicans so despised a class among the Jews?



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CHAPTER XV

THE LIFE OF JESUS

THE NEW TESTAMENT HAS TWENTY-SEVEN BOOKS. Four of these books are grouped about a Person, Jesus Christ. Their purpose is to present Him, His acts, and His words. One book has for its theme the ministry of His apostles, and their work in relation to the founding of His Church. Of the remaining books the most are written to His followers, either individuals or Churches, for instruction in the truth of the Christian religion, for practical counsel, for warning and exhortation. Thus it is seen that in the entire New Testament library a personality is supreme. To know the New Testament, to be prepared to teach it, one must be acquainted with Jesus Christ. It is all-important that He be pre-eminent in our thought as He was in the thought of the people of the New Testament. We must learn habitually to read and study the entire New Testament with Jesus Christ standing constantly in the foreground.

Jesus lived almost two thousand years ago. Through all these centuries men have been thinking and speaking of Him in terms of their own times, and He has been the subject of art, of poetry, and of doctrine-making. Most of us had our ideas of Him before we came to any thoughtful study of the Gospels. But to be exact teachers, it is necessary for us to go to the Gospels and find for ourselves the Jesus which they portray, and thereby come to a first-hand knowledge of Him.

1. Sources for the Life of Jesus. We can not become acquainted with Jesus anywhere else than in the New Testa-

ment. It is our only source of detailed information concerning Him dating from anywhere near His own time. Of secular writers only Tacitus, Pliny, Suetonius, and Josephus make any mention of Him, and none speak of Him at length. Of New Testament books the earlier epistles of Paul are nearest in point of time to His life. They give us, incidentally, considerable information concerning Him, such as the record of His appearances after His resurrection, His Davidic descent, His poverty, and the meekness and gentleness of His nature. They contain also much of His teaching, but in a distinct Pauline form and phraseology. It is evident, therefore, that the four Gospels must be the great principal source of our intimate knowledge of Jesus. It must be borne in mind that the Gospels are not biographies in the sense in which the word is commonly used. The biographical purpose is combined with the pedagogical. The aim of the writers was to teach about Jesus—who He was, His mission and work—not merely to give the facts concerning His life.

2. Birth and Early Life. Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea. The date can not be fixed with certainty, but was probably between the years 4 and 6 B. C. Joseph, accompanied by Mary, had come to Bethlehem from Nazareth, of Galilee, to be enrolled at his ancestral home, a census having been commanded by the Emperor Augustus. After the fulfillment of the religious rites required by the law at the birth of a male child, from fear of Herod the little company fled to Egypt, where they remained until Herod's death, and then returned to Nazareth. One only of the Gospels has any reference to these intervening years of childhood and youth, but Luke's brief mention is rich in suggestion. From it a beautiful picture may be truthfully drawn of an ideal childhood in which a strong and vigorous body, an alert mind, a submissive will, and an obedient heart all were important elements. We may well believe that in the ensuing years of silence and obscurity, through daily discipline, earnest and prolonged searching to know and to do the Father's will, and

unvarying obedience to the Spirit's leading, the youth Jesus was coming gradually into possession of that marvelous perfection of character which, revealed in the brief period of His active ministry, has received the reverent admiration of all succeeding centuries.

The ministry of John the Baptist immediately preceded that of Jesus. John was a unique figure, reminding us in many respects of the prophet Elijah. Apparently without any previous consultation with Jesus, conscious within himself that a day of great spiritual opportunity and privilege was at hand, he went forth into the region of Judea and the Jordan Valley to preach a stern message of denunciation, of warning, and of invitation to repentance. He offered baptism in the Jordan as a confession of sin, as a profession of repentance, and as a pledge of remission. He made no attempt to attach disciples to himself, but rather spoke of a Coming One, whose baptism would be spiritual, and who would exercise a ministry of judgment.

Jesus set His seal of approval on John's work by presenting Himself for baptism. John at first demurred, then consented to baptize Him. As Jesus came from the water, He was conscious of the Holy Spirit coming upon Him and of the Father's attestation of His Divine Sonship. Luke inserts in his account the parenthetical statement that Jesus at this time was about thirty years of age.

The baptism was immediately followed by a period of special temptation. There had come to Jesus a new sense of His power. Power always brings temptation. How should this power be used? The evil suggestion was for ministry to self, for vain display, for selfish aggrandizement. But Jesus had hidden the Word of God in His heart, and on every occasion of temptation the Word aided Him in successful defense.

The fourth Gospel, as the second, has no account of the birth and early life of Jesus. But the Gospel of John alone has a vivid account of certain opening events of Jesus'

ministry. (See John 1:19—4:42.) John the Baptist introduced Jesus, first to priests and Levites from Jerusalem, and then to some of his own disciples, in such a way as to enlist them as followers of Jesus. There followed what was probably a brief period of preaching and teaching in Judea, then in Galilee, and then again in Judea.

3. The Public Ministry. With the imprisonment of John the Baptist, by Herod, the public ministry of Jesus began. He withdrew from Judea into Galilee, removed His residence from Nazareth to Capernaum, and from that city as a center began to preach to the people that the kingdom of God had come, and to teach in the synagogues. He extended to four men—Simon, Andrew, James, and John—already His disciples—an invitation to turn from their occupation of fishing and to become "fishers of men." He commanded the attention and interest of the multitude by exercising a ministry of healing in the vicinity of Capernaum, and then, when they thronged about Him with excess of curiosity, He departed on a tour of preaching and healing through Galilee. As He went from place to place He drew after Him certain disciples. We have reason to believe that there were more of these followers than are named in the Gospel narratives. We know that among them was Levi, the publican, who became Matthew, the author of the first Gospel. Erelong from the company of disciples He chose twelve apostles to be His authorized representatives, to go forth in His name and impart His teaching to the world. To them and the whole company of disciples He gave that most remarkable summary of His teaching, the Sermon on the Mount. Accompanied by the apostolic band, and at times by a larger number, He itinerated from place to place, ministering in body, mind, and soul to all who were in need, and using His acts of mercy and kindness as means of enforcing His spoken message.

The teaching of Jesus centered in His proclamation of the Father's love and care for men, and His declaration of the duty of men to love God and their fellow-men with their

whole hearts, and to live lives of inward purity and self-sacrificing service. He began His teaching by proclaiming that the kingdom of God was at hand, and exhorting men to repent and believe the Good News. Only those could be members of the kingdom who possessed the true righteousness, not that of the letter, but of the spirit, consisting in being like God: merciful, forgiving, long-suffering, gentle, peaceable, and kind. No good work was to be performed for honor, glory, or the praise of men. Life was to be lived trustfully, without anxious care or worry. The Father ever regarded His own and would supply every need. Whatever was asked of Him in faith would be granted. Little children were of the kingdom, and men were commanded to be like them. To realize the life and character of the child of God constituted the true riches, the wealth which could not be lost or destroyed, and to attain to this must be the constant ideal; to be a disciple one must be willing to sacrifice all lower pleasures and aims, even to lose one's life. His disciples were to be a light to the world. Even as His words contained the life-giving principle, so His followers must be a leavening influence in the world. His kingdom would not prevail suddenly, nor come by observation, but gradually and silently. No power of earth or hell would be able to triumph against it. Into it would be gathered peoples of all lands and races. Its members possessing eternal life, would live forever with God and share His glory and His joy. This was the Gospel which, reinforced by constant works of kindly ministry and by many illustrations from nature and the common life about Him, Jesus preached through Judea, Galilee, and Samaria. He put forth no public assertions of Messiahship, and when John the Baptist, becoming doubtless somewhat impatient, sent from his lonely prison cell to ask Him whether He was the Messiah who should come, He replied only in terms of the merciful ministry which He was bearing to men.

But there was not lacking those who found reason for

offense even in such a gracious and beautiful life as this. The Pharisees, the dominant religious party of the time among the Jews, were stirred, first to jealousy, and then to hatred. The common people heard Him gladly, and many turned from their proud and haughty self-appointed teachers to Him, the meek and lowly One, who by His spirit and His words revealed the Heavenly Father anew to them. This stirred the Pharisees to jealousy. Jesus did not patronize them, but boldly exposed their hypocrisy, their spiritual pride, their lack of Godlike qualities of character, and condemned them in severest terms. This aroused their enmity and hostility. So long as He was comparatively unknown they made no pronounced manifestation against Him. As the knowledge of Him spread they began to plan open and pronounced opposition. The multitudes also, who at first followed Him from place to place, began to desert Him. They, too, were disappointed in Him. They wanted a popular hero, a spectacular Messiah, a political leader who would organize revolt against Rome. He repeatedly refused to accede to their Messianic ideas and demands, and presented His mission in its exclusively spiritual character. It was not His work, He declared, to feed the multitudes with bread, such as Moses gave, but to impart to them His spirit and His truth. At this epoch many superficial disciples forsook him, but the twelve remained true. He had given Himself largely to instructing and training them, giving them practical training by taking them upon tours of evangelization and healing, and then increasing their self-reliance and enlarging their experience by sending them out two and two through Galilee. He told them little of Himself. Gradually, however, they were coming to their own appreciation and valuation of Him, and when, on a journey for retirement and rest in the region of Cæsarea Philippi, He asked them for their estimate of Him, Peter as spokesman declared their conviction that He was the Christ, the Son of God. Jesus accepted this confession from their lips. and declared to them that it was heaven-born.

But he further indicated that the time had not yet come for this to be spread abroad, and asked them to tell no man.

From this very hour a new element entered into the teaching of Jesus; He began to declare to them that He must suffer rejection and condemnation from the hands of the leaders of the nation, and be killed by them. At first the disciples revolted from this, but afterward appear to have placed it in the background of their thought. Jesus declared to them that this test of rejection and condemnation which He had already met in anticipation was also the test of true discipleship; that His disciples could only gain the true life by a readiness to lose their present life for His sake. This first pronounced teaching of Jesus concerning His rejection was followed very shortly by His transfiguration. We can not but feel that the two have a very intimate connection.

It is difficult—indeed, quite impossible—to fix chronological periods in the life of our Lord. Some scholars have maintained that the active ministry extended over a period of between three and four years. Eminent authorities have contended for a period of one and a half years. None of the evangelists were sufficiently interested in the time element to furnish us with conclusive data. Upon this all are agreed, from the occasion of Peter's confession events rapidly crowd on to the tragic end. A brief period was occupied in the further intimate instruction of the company of apostles and disciples; Capernaum was revisited; an autumn journey was taken to Jerusalem to the Feast of Tabernacles (see John 7:1—8:59); a brief period of ministry was spent in Perea, during which, by the aid of the seventy, an effort was made to carry the Gospel to that section of Jewish territory to which Jesus had previously given little attention (see Luke 9:51—19:28, especially 10:1-24); then came the triumphal entry and martyrdom.

4. **The Passion Week and the Forty Days.** The triumphal entry was Jesus' public proclamation of Messiahship. Be-

fore this He had carefully refrained from such an announcement and had given Himself to a ministry of mercy and to acquainting His followers with His spirit and His teaching. Now the time had come when He desired it to be understood that He was the Christ, and to this end He carefully planned the fulfillment of a distinctly understood Messianic prophecy, and accepted from the people Messianic titles. The triumphal entry probably took place on Sunday, the first day of the week. On the next day Jesus again asserted His royal authority by the cleansing of the temple. Tuesday was a day of conflict with the Jewish leaders. Boldly He declared that they fought against the Lord, but warning and condemnation of their evil course only intensified their enmity and deepened their determination to take His life (see Mark 11:27—12:12). Probably on the evening of this very day the conspiracy was entered into between the chief priests and Judas Iscariot for His arrest. Wednesday was spent, it is thought, at Bethany in quiet retreat with His friends. On the evening of Thursday the Last Supper was celebrated, and the Master, clearly foreseeing what was about to take place, spoke His farewell messages of instruction and consultation to His own. During that same night He was taken by the treachery of one of the twelve, and led bound for trial, first to the Jewish Sanhedrin, then to Pilate, the Roman procurator of Judea. The charge brought against Him was that He blasphemed by calling Himself the Son of God, and that He was a traitor to Rome because He claimed to be a king. Pilate was disposed to release Him on the ground of no adequate evidence in support of the charge; but under the influence of the insistent and angry demand of the mob, led by the chief priests, cowardly delivered Him to their will, consenting to His crucifixion. The turbulence of the mob and the cupidity of the favor-seeking official are clearly indicated by Luke's statement: "They were urgent with loud voices, asking that He might be crucified. And their voices prevailed. And Pilate gave sentence that what they asked

for should be done. . . . Jesus he delivered up to their will." (Luke 23:23-25.)

The sentence of Pilate was carried out with unseemly haste. Before the setting of Friday's sun the greatest tragedy of the world's history had been enacted and the dead body of the Man of Galilee lay in the rock-hewn tomb of Joseph of Arimathea. It remained for the guilty conspirators themselves to give largest credence to the declaration of Jesus that He would rise again. While His disciples in sorrow and despair dispersed to their former homes, the chief priests and the Pharisees were using every means to make sure His tomb. But His spirit could not be bound, and when, at the dawn of Sunday, woman's devotion led two on love's errand of ministry to a dead body, they found an empty tomb. Jesus had risen from the dead.

After His resurrection, Jesus appeared to His disciples on several occasions at intervals during a period of forty days. At such times He reassured their faith in Him as the Christ, declared to them that it was inevitable that He should be rejected, should suffer, and should rise again; gave to them the Great Commission of world evangelization, and promised them His presence and His Spirit's power in its fulfillment. Finally at Bethany He departed from them in bodily presence, having given to them His benediction and having received from them their worship as Master and Lord.

Lesson Outline:

The central theme of the New Testament.
Sources for the life of Jesus.
Birth and early life.
The public ministry.
The Passion Week and the forty days.

Books for Reference:

Farrar, "The Life of Christ."
Gilbert, "The Student's Life of Jesus."
Edersheim, "The Life and Times of Jesus the Messiah."
Stevens, "The Teaching of Jesus."

Topics for Special Study:

1. Jesus' teaching on sin.
2. The attitude of Jesus towards the Old Testament.
3. The Sermon on the Mount; the theme, the main divisions, the central teachings.
4. Light on the life of Jesus from the Epistles.
5. The historical evidence for the Resurrection.

Topics for Class Discussion:

1. What are the principal sources of our knowledge of Jesus?
2. In what did discipleship consist for the first followers of Jesus?
3. Can the teachings of Jesus be practically applied now in every-day life?
4. Why was Jesus crucified?
5. What was the attitude of Jesus toward the Messianic ideals of His time?

Chronological Outline of the Life of Jesus.

(The chronology of the life of our Lord can not be definitely determined. The following scheme presents the general outline of Jesus' life according to consensus of scholarly opinion. The subdivisions with dates are presented only as a possible arrangement.)

1. *The Thirty Years of Silence.* From the birth of Jesus, 5 B. C., to the beginning of the ministry of John the Baptist, summer of 26 A. D.

2. *The Opening Events of Jesus' Ministry.* From the beginning of John's ministry, summer of 26 A. D., to the public appearance of Jesus in Jerusalem, Passover, April, 27 A. D.

3. *The Early Judean Ministry.* From the public appearance of Jesus in Jerusalem, Passover, April, 27 A. D., until the return to Galilee, December, 27 A. D.

4. *The Galilean Ministry.* From the return to Galilee in December, 27 A. D., until the final departure from Galilee in November, 29 A. D.

5. *The Perean Ministry.* From the final departure from Galilee in November, 29 A. D., to the final arrival at Jerusalem, before the Passover, April, 30 A. D.

6. *The Passion Week.* From the final arrival at Jerusalem, April, 30 A. D., to the resurrection.

7. *The Forty Days.* From the resurrection, April, 30 A. D., to the ascension, May, 30 A. D.

CHAPTER XVI

THE GOSPELS

How the New Testament Came to Be. The earliest documents of Christianity which have come down to our own age are certain letters of the Apostle Paul. Jesus Himself wrote nothing. After His ascension His followers were at first content to repeat His teachings from memory, and inasmuch as it was generally believed among them that He would return within their lifetime, probably no need was realized for written records of His life and deeds. As soon as Churches were established the relation of dependence between the Church and its founder called for communications between them. Certain of these communications, by no means all of them, escaped destruction and remain to us as the first written records of the Christian religion. As the generation of those who had seen and known Christ in the flesh began to pass away, and as Christianity spread far beyond the territorial bounds of Jesus' own work, the need was felt for accurate accounts of His words and acts. Thus the Gospels were called into existence.

The Gospels no doubt took form gradually. There is no reason to suppose that they sprang at once into their present full-grown and finished state. Back of them lie collections of the sayings of Jesus, reports of sermons and conversations, fragmentary records of sections of His ministry. Just as a biographer first accumulates his material in the way of records, printed utterances, traditions of sayings, recollections of friends and acquaintances, so doubtless the Gospel writers utilized already existing records.

Time Represented in Writing and Literary Form. The New Testament differs from the Old both in respect to length of time covered in writing and in variety of literary form represented. It is the expression of the inspiration of the earliest Christian consciousness. One hundred twenty-five years at most represents the period within which the books were written. The literary forms are fewer; the books themselves may all be classified as historical, epistolary, or apocalyptic. Occasional examples of some other literary forms—as poetry, parable, and oratory—are to be found within the various books.

On the following page will be found an arrangement of the books of the New Testament in the probable order of their writing. It would immensely aid the student in his understanding of Christianity to take up the study of the books in the order of their writing, but this for our present purpose seems impracticable. The student should, however, study this table until it becomes familiar to him, and until he fully realizes that the common order in which the books are presented in our New Testament is quite an arbitrary one.

The Language of the New Testament. Although all the apostles were Hebrews, the books of the New Testament were written in the Greek language. As one effect of the conquests of Alexander the Great, the Greek language had become widely diffused and was the common medium of literary expression throughout the ancient world. The Greek of the New Testament is a peculiar idiom, differing in vocabulary, structure, and style from the classical form of the language, and is commonly called Hellenistic Greek. Aramaic was the common spoken language of Palestine in the time of Christ, and traces of this language are found on the pages of the New Testament.

DATES ASSIGNED TO THE BOOKS OF THE NEW TESTAMENT BY REPRESENTATIVE MODERN SCHOLARS.

	Conybeare and Howson.	B. Weiss.	Burton.	Various Commentators
James,	. .	About 50	45-62	Mayer, 40-50
1 Thessalonians,	52	. . . . .	End of 52	Milligan, Prob. 50-51
2 Thessalonians,	53	. . . . .	53	Milligan, Prob. 50-51
Galatians,	57	. . . . .	Probably 54	Lightfoot, 57-58
1 Corinthians,	57	. . . . .	57	Lias, 57
2 Corinthians,	57	. . . . .	57-58	Plummer, About 58
Romans,	58	. . . . .	About 58	Sanday, 58
Philippians,	62	. . . . .	62	Lightfoot, About 58-59
Philemon,	62	. . . . .	63	Lightfoot, 62-63
Colossians,	62	. . . . .	63	Lightfoot, 62-63
Ephesians,	62	. . . . .	63	Lightfoot, 62-63
1 Timothy,	67	. . . . .	Between 63-65	Humphreys, 66-67
Titus,	67	. . . . .	Between 63-65	Humphreys, 66-67
2 Timothy,	68	. . . . .	Between 63-65	Humphreys, 66-67
Jude,	. .	About 60-62	Probably 65-67	Bigg, About 65
1 Peter,	. .	About 50	Probably 65-68	Bigg, 58-64
Mark,	. .	About 68-70	66-70	Swete, Before 70
Matthew	. .	About 70	68-72	Allen, 65-75
Luke,	. .	70-80	Probably 70-80	Plummer, 75-80
Acts,	. .	After 80	Probably 70-80	Lumby, Prob. about 56
2 Peter,	. .	175-200	Uncertain, say 66-68	Bigg, Prob. about 65
Hebrews,	. .	. . . . .	Probably about 66	Goodspeed, Prob. 90-96
Revelation,	. .	70	Probably 68-70	Swete, 90-96
John,	. .	. . . . .	Probably 90-100	Westcott, About 100
1 John,	. .	. . . . .	Probably 90-100	Westcott, 90-100
2 John,	. .	. . . . .	Probably 90-100	Westcott, 90-100
3 John,	. .	. . . . .	Probably 90-100	Westcott, 90-100

I. The Four Gospels.

Gospel. The word is from the Anglo-Saxon *Godspell*, meaning "God story," and is used as a translation of the Greek term meaning "good tidings." As Jesus used it the word meant the good news of the kingdom of God, or the good tidings of the favor and love of God. After the resurrection it was used to mean the good tidings about Christ, and so later it came to be applied to the written record of the life and words of Jesus. The New Testament has four distinct records of His life, which are spoken of as the Four Gospels.

Resemblances and Differences. The student of the Gospels soon discovers that they fall naturally into two unequal groups—one of three books, the other of one. Matthew, Mark, and Luke have many characteristics in common, while John stands by itself. The resemblances of the first three Gospels extend to a similarity in general content, in quotations from the Old Testament, in sequence of events, in purpose, and in general atmosphere, and are such that the three, as distinguished from the fourth, are spoken of as the Synoptic Gospels, from two Greek words meaning "together" and "view;" that is, a common view.

The Gospel of John is distinguished from the Synoptic Gospels in various particulars, of which we note these: (1) John is chiefly interested in the Judean ministry of Jesus, while the interest of the synoptists centers in Galilee. Much the larger part of the common synoptic narrative deals with the Galilean ministry, and almost none of this is paralleled in John. On the other hand, the synoptists narrate in detail only one visit of Jesus to Jerusalem, while John tells us of five such occasions. (2) John is more concerned with the teaching of Jesus and its interpretation than with an historical record of the events of Jesus' life and ministry. He pays little attention to sequence of happenings. He records only those events which serve his purpose of interpretation. He alone records significant conversations of

Jesus, such as that with Nicodemus and that with the woman of Samaria. While the synoptists tell of many miracles, John records comparatively few, and those almost incidentally. Curiously enough, however, John gives no account of the Sermon on the Mount, the teaching of which is accorded large space by Matthew and Luke. John also records fewer of Jesus' parables than the other evangelists. (3) From the time of the Church Fathers the Gospel of John has been known as the most "spiritual" of the Gospels. The synoptists are content to record many incidents without comment; John is interested in discerning the spiritual meaning of these events. John treats the ministry in a more subjective manner than do the synoptists.

The Synoptic Problem. The resemblances between the first three Gospels, noticed above, has given rise in modern times to inquiry into the relationship between these Gospels and its explanation. This question, an exceedingly interesting and intricate one, is commonly called the Synoptic Problem. We can note only a few of the facts with which scholars must deal in the investigation of the question: (1) *Similarities.* The synoptists have the same general outline of the life and ministry. Beyond this they record very largely the same events in these periods. This fact becomes the more striking when we remember that the entire record is of small compass, containing a mere fractional part of the Master's words and deeds. These common events are given in the same order. For the various accounts of single events the same form of expression is used. Not only so, but the similarity frequently extends to the use in common of certain rare and unusual words. (2) *Differences.* Each Gospel is distinct in purpose, as our later study will show. Identical events are interpreted by the different writers in accord with their respective purposes. In some instances there are wholly independent accounts of the same event. The sum total of events are not identical; each Gospel is peculiar in having some incidents not elsewhere given, and in omitting certain incidents given by the others. Luke, for ex-

ample, has a long section on the ministry in Perea (Luke 10: 25—18: 14), which has no parallel in either of the other Gospels, while Matthew and Mark record a journey of Jesus toward Tyre and Sidon and return through Decapolis to the Sea of Galilee (Matt. 15: 21-39; Mark 7: 31—8: 21), to which Luke does not allude.

There are certain ascertained facts which must be used in the working-out of any theory explanatory of these resemblances and differences: (1) The Gospel of Mark is a common source used by both Matthew and Luke. This is shown by the fact that in material common to all three Gospels there is a much closer resemblance between Mark and Matthew and between Mark and Luke than between Matthew and Luke. (2) Before the Gospels were written oral tradition concerning the life and sayings of Jesus had attained to more or less fixed form, and this was familiar to all the evangelists. (3) Papias (A. D. 130) speaks of the "sayings" (logia) of Matthew. It is evident that Matthew, who has certain discourses of Jesus not given by the other evangelists, used this "logia" material. (4) Luke made use of a document dealing with the Perean ministry of Jesus, which was not possessed by the other evangelists.

Beyond these outstanding facts there are many minor details which must be taken into account in the consideration of the problem. Much prolonged, minute, and earnest study has been given to the Synoptic Problem by eminent scholars, but owing to its complicated nature no generally accepted theory has yet been proposed.

II. The Gospel According to Matthew.

Authorship. The book does not name its author. The title "According to Matthew" is not conclusive, since it might mean no more than that the book records the Gospels as preached or taught by Matthew. There is decisive internal evidence that the author is a Jew. Of the four Gospels, this has a distinctively Jewish tone. Note the genealogies of the

first chapter, by which the ancestry of Jesus is traced through David to Abraham, the father of the faithful. The genealogical list is divided into three groups, of twice seven generations each, revealing the Jewish fondness for the numbers three and seven. There are other marked illustrations in the book of this same favoritism for these numbers. The phrase, "that it might be fulfilled which was spoken through the prophet," occurs again and again. The writer shows an intimate familiarity with Jewish customs, laws, history, and with the Old Testament Scriptures. This testimony to Jewish authorship is so abundant as to lead to common assent on this point. Tradition declares that this Jewish author was Matthew the apostle. This is concurred in by practically all students of the New Testament. Interesting corroboration is found in the detail with which this Gospel deals with whatever relates to the former office of Matthew. Here alone is found (17:24-27) the incident concerning the payment of the temple tax. Again, the Roman taxes were paid in denarii; when the question is raised concerning the lawfulness of paying tribute to Cæsar, Mark and Luke report Jesus as asking for a penny, but Matthew has, "Show me the tribute money" (22:19). Matthew alone reports the warnings of Jesus against false swearing, and His teaching concerning the vain distinctions between forms of oaths (5:33-37; 23:16-22).

The Author. Very little is known concerning the early or later life of Matthew. Mark speaks of him as "Levi, the son of Alphæus." From the fact that Mark also names James the Less as "the son of Alphæus," it has been asserted by some that Matthew and James the Less were brothers, but this is only conjectural. Mark and Luke record his call from the tax collector's booth to discipleship, and also that he made a great feast in Jesus' honor, at which many publicans and sinners were guests (Mark 2:13-17; Luke 5:27-29). His name is included in the various enumerations of the Twelve Apostles, but not a word or act ascribed to him is recorded after the account of the farewell feast. He

shows his own modesty of disposition by omitting all references to this feast in his own house, and by inserting the words "the publican" after his name (10:13), and reveals a fine courtesy by naming Thomas before himself in the list of apostles, whereas the other Gospels give the names in reverse order. That a man with gifts such as to fit him for the authorship of the first Gospel had other than an inconspicuous part in the councils and activities of the apostolic band can not be doubted. Our lack of information concerning him but emphasizes the paucity of the records of the Apostolic Age.

Purpose. The book consists almost wholly of reports of the deeds and discourses of Jesus. The writer has inserted no argument in words of his own, and has almost no comment or connecting narrative. Clearly the purpose is other than to present a biography of Jesus, although this might be inferred as the aim at first glance. Careful study shows that the author is using his biographical and historical material in support of an unexpressed thesis. This was a common literary procedure of the time which finds illustration elsewhere in the New Testament. This argumentative purpose is clearly, briefly, and comprehensively stated by Professor Burton: "To prove that Jesus is the true Messiah of the Jews; that He announced and founded the kingdom of God, expounding its true nature and setting forth its relation to the Old Testament religion; that He came, first of all, to the Jewish nation; that, when they showed signs of a disposition not to receive His message, He warned them that the consequence of such rejection would be that the kingdom would be taken from them; that, in fact, they did in the face of all this warning and instruction reject Jesus and put Him to death; and that, consequently, the kingdom ceased to be in any distinctive sense Jewish, and in place of the old national dispensation there was created by Jesus Himself, the true Jewish Messiah, a kingdom of all nations; thus universal Christianity, freed from all national restrictions or peculiarly Jewish institutions, becomes the true suc-

cessor of the Old Testament religion; the true Jew must be a follower of Jesus, and, in consequence, leave Judaism behind." (*A Short Introduction to the Gospels, p. 16.*)

Contents and Characteristics. Matthew begins his Gospel with a genealogy of Jesus, gives an account of the birth and infancy, of the ministry of John, and of the baptism and temptation of Jesus; narrates at length the events of the Galilean ministry, devotes a brief section to the Perean ministry, and in conclusion gives with considerable fullness the narrative of Passion Week and the Resurrection. Certain sections of the narrative are peculiar to the first Gospel. Ten of the parables, also, are found only in Matthew, as four events of the infancy, numerous incidents of the Passion Week and of the Resurrection, and various miscellaneous passages. A notable phrase, which occurs no less than thirty-two times, found nowhere else in the New Testament, is, "the Kingdom of the Heavens." Matthew is also the only one of the evangelists to speak of "the Church."

In accord with his argumentative purpose, Matthew pays little attention to chronology in arranging his narrative of events. He is interested in subjects rather than in order of events.

Matthew presents Jesus in His kingly aspects. He is the Messiah, the promised King, who founds the Kingdom of the Heavens, and in the future age shall reign triumphant.

In this Gospel we see, as nowhere else, the severity and sternness of Jesus. For example, the seven woes pronounced against the scribes and Pharisees (23:13-36) are recorded by Matthew alone.

There is a universal aspect to the Gospel which has been often overlooked. In the genealogy the names of four women, Gentiles, are introduced. Magi, Gentiles, come to do homage to the infant King. "Many shall come from the east and the west, and shall sit down with Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, in the kingdom of heaven" (8:11). Tyre and Sidon, heathen cities, shall be visited with lighter

punishment in the day of judgment than Chorazin, Bethsaida, and Capernaum (11:20-24). Finally, it is only Matthew who records the Great Commission to the disciples to "Go . . . and make disciples of all the nations" (28:19).

III. The Gospel According to Mark.

Authorship. The second Gospel nowhere names its author, nor so much as gives a hint by which he may be identified. In this instance, therefore, it only remains for us to rest back upon the tradition of the early Church. Two names are associated by tradition with the Gospel—Mark and Peter. It is commonly held that, while Mark was the author, he was dependent to a considerable extent upon the apostle for the materials of his narrative, and that this Gospel in a peculiar sense shows the influence of Peter. Various explanations have been offered of the fact that the Gospel makes no mention of Peter's walking on the water (Matt. 14:29), nor of the incident concerning the tribute money, in which Peter figures most conspicuously (Matt. 17:24-27), and omits both Jesus' statement that He had prayed especially for him (Luke 22:32) and that other striking statement addressed to Peter as the rock (Matt. 16:18).

Author. Mark is frequently named in the narratives of Acts and in the Epistles of Paul. He is sometimes called Mark (Acts 15:29; Col. 4:10; 2 Tim. 4:11), sometimes John Mark (Acts 12:12, 25), and at other times John (Acts 13:5, 13). He does not appear in the pages of the Gospel which bears his name, unless, as has sometimes been conjectured, he is the unknown young man who followed Jesus on the night of the betrayal (14:51, 52), or "the man bearing a pitcher of water" (14:13). He was a Jew by birth, a cousin of Barnabas (Col. 4:10), and son of a certain Mary, whose house was a meeting-place of the disciples (Acts 12:12).

Purpose. That the author of this Gospel has Gentiles

principally in mind as readers appears from the fact that when he speaks of Jewish customs he carefully explains them, and that when he uses an Aramaic term he interprets it. Moreover, he makes very slight use of quotations from the Old Testament, scarcely alludes to the Jewish law, and does not dwell at all on the relation of Jesus to the Old Testament religion and the prophecies.

The author's conception of Jesus is expressed in the opening sentence of the Gospel, "The beginning of the Gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God." The first incident introduced is that of the baptism, in which a Voice from the heavens declares, "Thou art My beloved Son." These sentences may be understood to present the writer's thesis. He does not proceed to establish it by arguments of his own, but presents a concise, lifelike picture of the person, the character, and the ministry of Jesus, trusting that as by His life and works Jesus produced the conviction in His disciples that He was the Christ, the Son of God, so his portrayal of the life and deeds of the Master will produce a like faith in his readers. "The prevailing aspect in which the second Gospel sets forth its subject is that of 'the Son of God with power' moving among men with His gift of miracle, and making the things of nature the servants of His grace."—*Salmond.*

Contents and Character. The chief interest of Mark is with the public ministry of Jesus. He has no mention whatever of the ancestry, the birth, and the childhood. Touching in a brief paragraph upon the ministry of John the Baptist, the baptism of Jesus and His temptation, he plunges at once into a narrative of the Galilean ministry, the account of which forms the major portion of his book. He omits all but one of the greater discourses of Jesus, and gives small attention to the parables. He concludes his Gospel with an account of the events of Passion Week and the Resurrection.

The second Gospel has the charm of simplicity. It is singularly free from rhetorical embellishment. It is a direct,

simple, straight-forward narrative of events. There is no waste of words. Yet it is peculiarly vivid. It has many realistic touches, expressions as to time, place, number, manner, which enable the reader to reproduce the scene or incident clearly in his thought.

The narrative is terse and rapid. Its key-word is "straightway," which occurs not less than forty-two times. There is no impression of haste, but rather of continual action, intensity, a ceaseless energy.

The impression made is of an orderly sequence. There is no arrangement of material according to subject, but rather a flowing narrative of events, apparently much in the order in which they occurred.

Mark presents Jesus not as the Teacher, but as the Doer. Concern is not so much with what He says as with what He does. He is not here King of the Jews, but the Master of all men and the Lord of nature. He makes no assertion of right or of power, but men and demons bow before Him, and all nature obeys His will. He is Master and Lord not because of supernatural origin or claim, but because of what He is and what He does. The Christ of Mark moves among men on the common plane of every-day life, a man of his own times; but men hear from Him words such as man never spoke before, see in Him a love and benevolence, a purity and virtue never known before, and behold exhibited by Him a power that compels the verdict, "Surely this man was the Son of God."

IV. The Gospel According to Luke.

Authorship. If the testimony of the early Church be given credence, there can be little question concerning the authorship of the third Gospel. Until the end of the ninth century there was no questioning of the unanimous opinion that Luke, the companion of Paul, who is mentioned in Colossians 4: 14; 2 Timothy 4: 11, and Philemon 24, is the author. Harnack calls attention to the fact that the book, being addressed

to a certain individual, must have had a title, and asserts that if this title had ever been changed there would have been allusions made to the change by early writers. Aside from the title there is little evidence to be found in the book itself as to authorship. The third Gospel and Acts have a common dedication to one Theophilus. Aside from this, the two works have so much in common that there is general agreement among scholars that both are by the same author. The reasons for holding that Luke wrote the Acts (see p. 195), therefore become reasons for believing him to be the author also of the third Gospel.

Author. Luke is mentioned by name in the New Testament only in the three instances named above. He was a Gentile, born probably in Antioch. He was a physician, and this indicates that he belonged to the middle class, and that he was a man of learning and culture, a fact substantiated by his literary style. Renan declared that this Gospel was the most beautiful book ever written. Luke became a companion of Paul on the apostle's missionary journeyings, and was with him in both his first and second imprisonment in Rome.

Purpose. In his preface Luke distinctly indicates his primary purpose in writing his Gospel. It is that Theophilus, to whom the book is addressed, may have an accurate and orderly account of that which he has previously received orally. Theophilus was probably a Gentile convert who desired to know more than was customarily taught the catechumens. Luke undoubtedly had also in view in writing a class of readers of whom Theophilus was fairly representative.

Contents and Characteristics. We have in Luke an account of the birth and infancy of Jesus peculiar to the third Gospel; an account of the Galilean ministry, in which the author has evidently used Mark, nearly three-fourths of Mark's material being reproduced; an account of the Perean ministry found only in this Gospel, and a narrative of the

events of Passion Week and of the Resurrection, which has some particulars not recorded by Mark or Matthew.

Luke's is the longest of the four Gospels; in addition to the long section on the Perean ministry he has eleven parables and the account of six miracles, not given elsewhere in the New Testament.

The language of Luke is colored by his medical training. Hobart, in an exhaustive study of the Gospel, prepared a long list of Greek medical terms which in the New Testament are found solely or chiefly in Luke. It is also true that he possesses a wider general vocabulary than any other New Testament writer, and uses a great many words peculiar to himself. He portrays Jesus as the great physician, healer of the bodies, as well as the souls, of men. At Nazareth, at the beginning of His ministry, Jesus declares that it is a part of His mission "to preach . . . recovering of sight to the blind, and to set at liberty them that are bruised"(4:18). In his discourse on this occasion he quotes the proverb, "Physician, heal thyself" (4:23). His miracles are largely miracles of healing; of the six mentioned above as peculiar to the third Gospel, five are miracles of physical healing.

In the literature of the early Church the symbol of the ox is frequently applied to the Gospel of Luke. This symbolism is fit as bringing out the emphasis of Luke upon the patience, the gentleness, and the long-suffering of Jesus. Luke also dwells upon the sympathy and compassion of Jesus for the outcast; he only has given to us the parable of the prodigal (15:11-32), the story of the good Samaritan (10:25-37), the incident of the visit to Zaccheus, the publican (19:1-10), the anointing of Jesus by the sinful woman in the house of Simon the leper (7:36-50), the assurance of pardon to the believing thief (23:39-43), and other incidents which have brought comfort to many weak and erring yet penitent hearts through the Christian centuries.

Women are singularly prominent in the narratives of

Luke. How prophetic of the place to be occupied by woman in the future activities of the Christian Church! And what a contrast to the regard in which woman was held in the civilization of the day! Only in the Gospel of Luke do we meet certain women who early became believers and faithful disciples of Jesus and remained loyal to him through the darkest hours.

The third Gospel is rich in social teachings. No other Gospel has so much to say about money; no other points out so clearly the danger and the abuses of riches; no other gives so fully the warnings of Jesus to the rich, and His condemnation of injustice, oppression, and the misuse of power. Nowhere else is His sympathy for the poor and the oppressed so fully shown.

Luke, as Mark, makes us acquainted with the man Jesus. The secrets of His inner life are made known. For example, His habit of prayer is revealed to us. In many instances, not elsewhere recorded, we find Jesus engaging in prayer to His Father, and we come to realize His great dependence upon prayer, and find in it one secret of His power. For Him the way of access to God is always open; at any time it is possible for Him freely to talk with God, and in such communion to find the answer to His deepest needs.

The Christ of Luke is a fellowman living a man's life, subject to man's physical infirmities, tempted like as other men are, filled with compassion for the ills, the weaknesses, and the sorrows of all mankind, ever busy healing the bodies of men, and speaking to them the good tidings of the kingdom of God; a man, yet so filled with the Holy Spirit, of such power, of such nobility, of such glory, that those who entered into most intimate fellowship with Him felt that He was more than they, and from calling Him Master and Teacher came from inward compulsion to hail Him as Lord, as Christ the Chosen, the Son of God.

Perhaps the most significant aspect of the Gospel of Luke

remains to be noted; that is, the universal human note which it has. The ancestry of Jesus is traced back not to David or to Abraham, but to Adam, "the son of God," and thus Jesus is identified with the universal human family, which is itself the offspring of God. Luke only records that the preaching of John the Baptist re-echoed the faith of the prophet that "all flesh shall see the salvation of God" (3: 3-6); in his record of the first teaching of Jesus he shows that Jesus dwelt upon the ministry of Elijah and Elisha to Gentiles (4:25-27), and he closes his Gospel by quoting as among the last words of the Savior the statement that "repentance and remission of sins should be preached in His name unto all the nations" (24:47). Luke and Paul, the apostolic herald of a world-wide Gospel, were truly of kindred spirit.

V. The Gospel According to John.

Authorship. The fourth Gospel was uniformly attributed to the Apostle John by the early Church, and this was practically undisputed until the close of the eighteenth century. During the last one hundred and twenty-five years, however, this Gospel has been the center of intense controversy. The marked differences between the synoptics and the fourth Gospel in the report of Jesus' sayings and in His discourses, the entirely different point of view represented by the Gospel, have been made the basis of contentions that this Gospel can not have proceeded from an eyewitness of the ministry, and from a co-worker with the other three evangelists who must have been acquainted with their accounts. These objections have prompted the most scholarly, intense, and prolonged study of the Gospel, and research into the whole subject, which in its turn has served to emphasize with new force the facts that the Gospel gives unmistakable evidence of having been written by a Jew of Jesus' own time, and of being the work of an eye-witness of the events which are narrated. It is generally conceded that it was written later than the Synoptic Gospels, that

the narrative was shaped somewhat to accord with an apologetic purpose, that more of the writer's personality entered into his writing than in the case of the other evangelists, and that the Gospel bears evidences of some additions (note especially 21:1-25) by a later hand. These conclusions do not interfere at all with the life-long faith of the Church that in the fourth Gospel we have an account of the personality, the life events, and the teaching of Jesus by that disciple, who by his intimacy with and understanding of the Master was best fitted to prepare such a record for future years.

Author. John never mentions himself by name in the course of his whole narrative—nor does he name his parents or his brother. From the Synoptic Gospels, however, we learn that John was a Galilean; that with his brother James he was a son of Zebedee, that the mother's name was Salome, that the family lived at Bethsaida near Capernaum, that the sons and the father were fishermen on the Sea of Galilee, and that they had boats, nets, hired servants, and a house of their own. There is exceedingly little information concerning the later life of John. In connection with the Council of Jerusalem, Paul speaks of him as one of the pillars of the Jerusalem Church. There is a widespread tradition that he lived in his old age at Ephesus, revered and beloved by all.

John was one of the innermost circle of Jesus' disciples (Mark 10:2; 3:7; Luke 6:14; Acts 1:13). He was in the death-chamber of the child of Jairus (Luke 8:51), he was one of the company who witnessed the transfiguration (Matt. 17:1), with Peter he was sent by Jesus to prepare the Passover (Luke 22:8), with Peter and James he witnessed the agony in Gethsemane (Mark 14:33), and to him Jesus on the cross committed the care of His mother (John 19:25-27). This intimacy, together with his alert and eager spirit, his profound and contemplative mind, his tender and delicate sensibility, his capacity for friendship, for

love, and for intense devotion enabled him to understand Jesus better than any of his fellows. Says Augustine: "For not without reason is it mentioned in his own Gospel that at the feast he reclined upon the bosom of his Lord. From that bosom he had in secrecy drunk in the stream, but what he drank in secret he poured forth openly."

John has rightfully been known throughout the history of the Church as the apostle of love, but this has sometimes been misinterpreted. He was farthest possible removed from the soft and effeminate character pictured under his name in the Middle Ages. The Gospels show us a man of courage, of moral strength, with capacity for heroic deeds. John and James were called by Jesus, Boanerges, sons of thunder, because of their inner fire and the prophetic energy of their natures. John was ready of word, quick in action, sometimes vehement in speech. He speaks forth as no other evangelist the wrath of God against sin and evildoing (3:18, 36; 5:29), and on more than one occasion showed his capacity for fiery indignation (Luke 9:49; 9:51-55). Altogether he was a rare and unusual figure, of brilliant gifts and attractive personality, a man of intense zeal and intellectual power, who magnified the gospel by his character as by his deeds, without whom the apostolic company would have been sadly incomplete, and well-deserving of that highest title—"John the beloved."

Purpose. John states the purpose of his writing in 20:31. It is in order that men may be strengthened in their belief that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that, thus believing, they may continue to have life through Him.

Contents and Characteristics. The omissions of John's Gospel are many and striking. He has no account of the miraculous birth or the infancy of Jesus, or of His family, His genealogy, or of His youth. He only touches on the ministry of John the Baptist, and omits all mention of the baptism of Jesus, the temptation, the transfiguration, the institution of the Lord's Supper, the agony in the garden, and

the ascension. His Gospel has nothing about demons, lepers, or publicans. Properly speaking, it has no parables and no eschatology. The historical narrative is begun with an account of the call of the first disciples; early events in Judea are described; the Galilean ministry is just touched upon, visits to Jerusalem being given chief attention; a few events of the Perean ministry are narrated; some events of Passion Week are described fully, the occurrences of the day of crucifixion being given with especial fullness, and the Gospel is brought to a close by an account of the resurrection and certain of the resurrection appearances. Much of the Gospel is taken up by conversations and discourses of Jesus; of those not found elsewhere there are: the conversation of Nicodemus (3:1-21), the conversation with the woman of Samaria (4:4-26), the discourse at the healing of the infirm man at the Pool of Bethesda (5:19-47), discourse on the bread of life (6:22-71), discourse on the light of the world (8:12-30), discourse on spiritual freedom (8:31-51), discourse on the good shepherd (10:1-21), and the farewell discourse to His disciples (14:1—16:33). The intercessory prayer of Jesus is also found only in John (17:1-26). The Gospel records only eight miracles, of which six are not elsewhere given.

A distinguishing characteristic of the fourth Gospel is the writer's comment or interpretation of Jesus' words. This is often so interwoven with his narrative that it is difficult to discern where direct quotation ends and his own statement begins. Due appreciation of this characteristic and attention to it is important to the study and understanding of the Gospel. Some examples of this are: 2:21; 2:23-25; 6:6, 64; 7:39.

John's Gospel emphasizes the Fatherhood of God. Jesus here speaks of God and addresses God as Father. Instances are: 4:23; 5:6, 19, 26; 10:17; 17:24, 26. In accord with this the Gospel dwells upon the love of God (3:17; 14:21, 23; 16:27).

The symbol of the Fourth Gospel in the literature of

the early Church was the flying eagle. John rises to loftier heights than any other Gospel writer. His Gospel has a sublimity, a reach, a spirituality that none other has. Said Augustine, "While the three evangelists remained below with the man Christ Jesus, and speak but little about His Godhead, John, as though impatient of treading the earth, rises from the very first word of his Gospel not only above the birds, the air, and the sky, but above angels and celestial powers, into the very presence of Him by whom all things were made." In this Gospel we are constantly in the presence of the Christ of God. Jesus walks among men as a man, speaks with a man's voice, feels weariness and pain, is truly a human being; but John will not for a moment allow us to forget that we are in the presence of the Son of God.

The Gospel of John speaks to the deep reaches of the human heart. It has a charm and a power of attraction that is all its own. It is the Gospel of mystics. It has cheered the lonely, comforted the sorrowing, encouraged the despairing, strengthened the dying, through all the Christian centuries. It speaks a language "to which no parallel whatever is to be found in the whole compass of literature." It makes men sure of God. Error and sin and unbelief can not stand in its light. It sings the Orphean song of heavenly life and love, in comparison with which all siren music of evil is but dismal discord.

The importance of John's Gospel can hardly be overestimated. In it we have a view of Jesus which we get nowhere else. Many hold that it presents the highest and truest revelation of Jesus ever given to His followers. To those who bring to it an unprejudiced mind and a receptive heart it bears a wonderful message of things divine, a message which can not be ignored. "If the Son of God did say and do things recorded in this document, then everything in the universe, every fact in the history of the world, the conclusions of all philosophy, the meaning of all scientific

discovery, the future of the world, and the goal of humanity must be affected by its disclosures."—*Reynolds.*

Lesson Outline:

How the New Testament came to be.
The language of the New Testament.
The Four Gospels; the word "Gospel;" resemblances and differences; the synoptic problem.
The Gospel according to Matthew.
The Gospel according to Mark.
The Gospel according to Luke.
The Gospel according to John.

Books for Reference:

Burton, "A Short Introduction to the Gospels."
Dods, "Introduction to the New Testament."
Farrar, "Messages of the Books."
Hazzard-Fowler, "The Books of the Bible."
Hastings, "One Volume Dictionary of the Bible." See articles on the various subjects.
Commentaries: Matthew, Allen, "International Critical Commentary on Matthew;" Mark, Swete, "The Gospel According to St. Mark;" Luke, Plummer, "International Critical Commentary on Luke;" John, Westcott, "St. John's Gospel," in the Bible Commentary Series.

Topics for Special Study:

1. The literary forms of the New Testament as compared with the Old Testament.
2. The language of the New Testament.
3. The resemblances and differences of the Synoptic Gospels in detail.
4. The teaching of Jesus in the Synoptic Gospels.
5. The parables of Jesus.

Topics for Class Discussion:

1. How do we come to have a New Testament?
2. How account for the similarities between the first three Gospels?
3. Which Gospel gives the most complete account of the life of Jesus?
4. What evidences are to be found in John of the report of an eye-witness?
5. Compare Jesus' teachings concerning Himself in the Synoptic Gospels and in John.

CHAPTER XVII

THE ACTS AND THE BEGINNINGS OF CHRISTIANITY

I. The Acts of the Apostles.

The Book of Acts stands alone in the New Testament as a history of the Early Christian Church. Moreover, it is the one book of the New Testament purely historical in character.

Authorship. Certain parts of the book, called technically the "we sections," are in the first person and are clearly the language of an eye-witness. These sections must, therefore, have been written by a companion of Paul. There is strong reason to hold on the basis of similarity of language and style that the entire book is from one hand. The only companion of Paul of whom we know, not excluded by the evidence of the apostle's letters, is Luke. The tradition of the Church from an early period agrees in assigning the authorship to Luke, "the beloved physician."

Purpose. The book is addressed to an individual, Theophilus, as a continuation of a former treatise (the third Gospel), and has for its aim to chronicle the growth and development of the movement inaugurated by Jesus in substantiation of His promise of power to His disciples and in obedience to His direction to them that they should be His witnesses in Jerusalem, in Judea, in Samaria, and to the uttermost parts of the earth.

Content and Character. Acts is divided into two parts. The first part, chapters 1 to 12, is a narrative of the growth of the Church in Jerusalem and from Jerusalem as a center.

Peter is the central figure, and the general theme is the triumphant progress of the gospel in spite of all opposition and persecution. The second part, chapters 12 to 28, relates the history of the extension of the Church throughout the empire. Antioch is the center, and the narrative deals almost altogether with the labors of Paul. We will become acquainted with the content of this second part in our later study of the Life of Paul (Chapters XVIII and XIX). An outline of the first half of the book is as follows:

CONTENTS OF PART I.

Introduction ..... 1:1—2:13
Prefatory statement 1:1-5
The Ascension of the Lord 1:5-11
Enumeration of the Apostles 1:12-14
Choice of Matthias as Apostle 1:15-26
The Gift of the Spirit 2:1-12
1. The Growth of the Church in Jerusalem...2:14—6:7
Sermon of Peter on the Day of Pentecost; three thousand added to the Church...2:14-41
Summary statement concerning progress and state of the Church 2:42-47
The lame man healed 3:1-10
Sermon of Peter in Solomon's porch.....3:11-26
First persecution 4:1-31
Summary statement concerning progress and state of the Church; hypocrites punished by death ..... 4:32—5:16
Second stage of persecution 5:17-42
Summary statement concerning progress and state of the Church; deacons appointed...6:1-7
Third stage of persecution; Stephen stoned, 6:8—8:3
2. Extension of the gospel from Jerusalem..8:4—12:24
Philip's ministry in Samaria 8:4-13
Ministry of Peter and John in Samaria.....8:14-25
Philip extends his work; the Ethiopian converted 8:26-40
The conversion of Saul 9:1-30
Summary statement concerning progress and state of the Church 9:31
Peter extends his ministry to Lydda and Joppa ..... 9:32—10:48
Peter's defense of his ministry to the Gentiles 11:1-18
Beginning of the Gospel in Antioch.....11:19-30

Fourth stage of persecution; Herod, the king, kills James and imprisons Peter; Peter delivered by the Lord, and Herod smitten 12:1-23
Summary statement concerning the triumphant progress of the Word..... 12:24

The book is not at all intended to be a complete account of the labors of the apostles or of the history of the Early Church. The author limits himself by his specific purpose and is satisfied to establish his contention by a narrative of parts of the personal history and a part of the activity of some of the apostles. It is an invaluable part of the New Testament; it alone gives us an account of the gift of the Spirit on the day of Pentecost, of the early progress and vicissitudes of the gospel in Jerusalem and among the Jewish people, of the earliest persecutions of the Christians, of the first martyrs of the faith, of the first Gentile convert, and of the beginnings of ecclesiastical organization. Considered as a history of the period, it is as remarkable for what it omits as for what it narrates. It omits all account of the ministry of a number of the apostles, of the later ministry of Peter, and of the death of Paul. We know from statements in Paul's letters that there are many important events of his missionary labors that are unmentioned in the Acts.

Investigations of recent years have confirmed the historical accuracy of Acts in a remarkable way. It has been proven that in minute details of geographical description, by the expert testing of his statements, that Luke was careful and exact, and that he possessed and used an accurate knowledge of political conditions. These investigations and resulting conclusions have strengthened confidence in the account which he gives of religious events and the early progress of the Church.

II. The Apostolic Church.

The Founding of the Church. Jesus did not Himself form an organization. He drew disciples about Him, centered their faith in Him as a religious teacher, as the promised Messiah

and the Son of God, committed to them His gospel, and gave them their commission of world evangelization; but He formed no separate or distinct organization. He set apart by His own appointment twelve of their number as apostles to be in a special sense His representatives and the leaders of the new movement; but neither the apostles nor the larger body of disciples fully realized either their call or their mission. The crucifixion of the Master came as a bitter disappointment to their hopes and resulted in their complete discouragement and confusion. It was the resurrection more than anything else which clarified their conceptions of Jesus and the kingdom, begat in them a realization of their mission, unified them as a company of believers, and gave them their word of testimony to the world. Christianity as an historical movement had its beginning when the disciples of Jesus became convinced of the resurrection of Jesus Christ. The Christian Church was born at the empty tomb of Jesus of Nazareth. The picture which meets us in the first chapters of Acts is that of a Church, and it is new; we do not find it anywhere in the Gospels. We have no account of any formal organization. There was no stated meeting with the passage of resolutions, the adoption of a constitution, and the election of officers. The organization was effected in the councils of heaven, not of earth; the resurrection was the means by which it became known and understood by the disciples. At first it was a waiting Church; along with the new consciousness of being there went a sense of unreadiness. The fitting for its world work came in the gift of the Spirit on the day of Pentecost.

Early History of the Church in Jerusalem. The first meetings of the infant Church were for prayer (1:14). At one of these meetings Peter proposed the selection of one to take the place of Judas in the apostolate. After prayer Matthias was selected by lot (1:15-26). The gift of the Spirit appears to have taken place in the early morning of the day of Pentecost. Immediately thereafter Peter preached to the multitude

and on that day three thousand received baptism and joined themselves to the disciples. From that time on the growth of the Church was continuous (2:1-47). Peter and John are associated as the leaders of the work, with Peter as chief spokesman. Peter heals the lame man at the door of the temple, preaches to the multitude who gather about, and on the following day defends the deed before the Jewish rulers (3:1-26; 4:5-12). In the first stages of persecution the Sadducees appear as the active agents; they were offended at the proclamation of the resurrection of Jesus and made a pretended zeal for public order a cloak for this prejudice. The apostles were, in a first instance, given a public hearing, commanded to cease preaching in the name of Jesus, threatened, and dismissed; on a second occasion they were only saved from severe punishment by the plea of Gamaliel (4:1-21; 5:17-42). But persecution only deepened their sense of obligation to declare their message (4:18-31; 5:27-32, 41, 42).

Luke records only occasional incidents of special significance in relation to his theme and passes over long intervals of intervening time by brief summary statements, sometimes, however, incorporating in these accounts of noteworthy events; such, for example, as the stern rebuke of hypocrisy by the death of Ananias and Sapphira (5:1-16), and the appointment of the Seven (6:1-6).

Stephen appears to have possessed and preached a conception of the universal aspect of Christianity; as soon as this was declared, the Pharisees, zealous as they were for the Law, were aroused and joined with the Sadducees in opposition to the Christians; this new stage of persecution resulting in the killing of Stephen and scattering the disciples throughout Judea and Samaria (6:8—8:3).

Growth of the Church under Persecution. Thus early in the history of the Church was it demonstrated that "the blood of the martyrs is the seed of the Church." The spirit of the persecuted Christians could not be daunted, and everywhere they went they preached the Good News of the kingdom, with

the result that groups of believers came to exist in many different places throughout Judea, Samaria, Phœnicia, even to Cyprus and Antioch. Luke's narrative describes only a few signal demonstrations of the gospel's power in the ministry of two of the leaders, Peter and Philip. The success of Philip in Samaria appears to have been immediate and far-reaching (8:4-25). The narrative of the meeting of Philip with the Ethiopian is of especial significance as showing how the gospel was carried into foreign parts by the Jewish proselytes who came to Jerusalem to worship (8:26-40).

Extension of the Gospel to Gentiles. The ministry of Peter at Cæsarea precipitated the question, on the one hand, of the relation of the gospel to the Gentiles, and, on the other, the relation of the new faith to Judaism. Here were questions of the largest importance, questions which involved the whole future of the Church, which had not before apparently been suggested to the leaders of the new movement. It is evident that Peter's experience as a follower of Jesus Christ had with him tended to minify the Levitical distinctions of which loyal Jews made so much, for at Joppa he lodged with a Jew who was a tanner, and therefore, according to Levitical teaching, unclean. Perhaps his intercourse with Simon brought the whole subject to his consideration; at any rate there came to him a vision, the meaning of which he understood to be that God wished him to disregard these distinctions which previously he had held as a part of sacred law. This vision prepared him to receive hospitably the urgent call of Cornelius, a devout Gentile. In the house of Cornelius he justified his presence by the announcement of what was from the standpoint of Judaism a revolutionary doctrine: "Unto me hath God showed that I should not call any man common or unclean." The approval of God upon his course was demonstrated by what was almost a complete repetition of the occurrences of Pentecost: "The Holy Spirit fell on all them that heard the Word," and the Gentiles spake "with tongues" and magnified God. This was a cause of amazement

to the Jewish companions of Peter. No doubt some had inward misgivings; but under the circumstances, who could have dared to accept the challenge of Peter, "Can any man forbid the water, that these should not be baptized, who have received the Holy Spirit as well as we?" It was inevitable that the report of Peter's course should provoke controversy in Jerusalem. Doubtless many did not at first understand the reason for Peter's disregard of Jewish law and custom. When he had fully related the circumstances, the objectors were—for the time being, at least—silenced. Some rejoiced, being convinced that "to the Gentiles also hath God granted repentance unto life" (11:1-18). But Jewish prejudice was exceedingly strong and deep, and this question of the call of the Gentiles and the conditions under which they should be admitted to the Church was one upon which there was to be prolonged and serious controversy.

Antioch early became a prominent center of gospel activity. A large number of Gentiles accepted the faith. When word of the ingathering reached Jerusalem, Barnabas was sent forth to minister to the new converts. He in turn sought out Saul, and together these two gave themselves for a year to the instruction and nurture of the young Gentile Church. This Church has especial interest for us, not only because it was the first well-known Gentile Church, but also because here followers of the Christ first came to be called Christians (11:19-26).

Organization and Development of the Church. The Apostolic Church, as we have seen, began as a society within the Jewish Church. The first Christians remained loyal to Judaism and its institutions, but they held that, the Messiah having come, obedience to the law was no longer sufficient to salvation. He who would be saved must now possess faith in Christ, repent of his sins, and accept baptism. At first the disciples continued their attendance upon the temple services and ritual, but they also had their own meetings. They came together in an upper room in Jerusalem, and later, as their

numbers increased, met in small congregations at the homes of certain of the members. For a considerable period of time they had no other meeting-places. Gradually their interest in the Jewish ordinances declined, and their observance of them ceased. The destruction of the temple in A. D. 70 undoubtedly operated to develop Christianity among the Jews as a distinct form of worship. But it was among Gentiles, not Jews, that Christianity was to spread most rapidly, and even by the close of the apostolic period the Church was predominantly Gentile.

At the beginning the believers met daily for worship. As their numbers multiplied and the ordinary affairs of life demanded more attention, the meetings for prayer, praise, and preaching became less frequent. Soon the first day of the week came into prominence a entitled to special reverence and was set apart for rest and worship as the Lord's day, because on this day their Lord had risen from the dead (see 1 Cor. 16:2; Acts 20:7; Rev. 1:10). Preaching was magnified as a means of edification in the meetings and as a missionary agency, but it is probable that teaching was placed first in importance. Jewish converts required careful instruction, and the need was much greater in the case of Gentiles who embraced the faith, as many of them knew nothing of the Scriptures and came over to Christianity from idolatry.

The form of organization in the Church was a gradual development. First in authority in the Church were the apostles, who had seen the Lord and had received their commission direct from Him. The entire supervision of the Church was at first in their hands. The earliest departure from this was in the appointment of "the Seven," to whom were committed definite duties of administration (5:3). We hear also of prophets (Acts 11:27; 13:1; 1 Cor. 12:28; Eph. 4:11), teachers (Acts 13:1; 1 Cor. 12:28), elders or presbyters (Acts 11:30; 15:6; 21:18), bishops (Acts 20:28; Phil. 1:1; 1 Tim. 3:1), and deacons (Rom. 16:1; Phil. 1:1). Paul's letters seem to reflect various stages of organization,

and it is doubtful if from the data given we can determine either the exact status of the various officers or the standard of organization aimed at by the apostles.

The first persecution of the Church was by the Jewish authorities. The attitude of the Roman State was in general that of indifference and non-interference. In some instances the government protected the Church leaders and openly befriended them (Acts 17:9; 19:33-41; 23:17-24). Christians were, therefore, friendly to the Roman power and regarded it as their protector. Toward the close of the apostolic period the spread of Christianity brought it more prominently to the notice of the emperor. The Roman persecutions were begun in the reign of Nero, the infamous. In the latest writing of the New Testament this is reflected in the changed attitude of the writers. The emperor comes to be regarded as the representative of the powers of evil, and is referred to in such terms as anti-Christ.

Lesson Outline:

The Acts of the Apostles.

The Apostolic Church: Founding of the Church; early history in Jerusalem; growth under persecution; extension of the gospel to the Gentiles; organization and development of the Church.

Books for Reference:

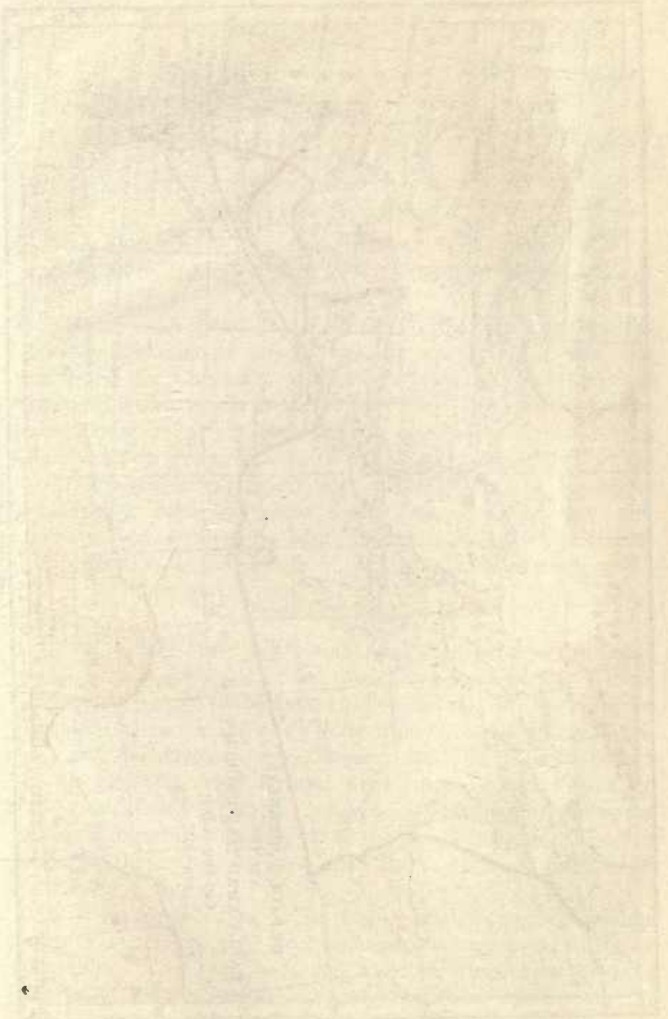
Farrar, "Messages of the Books."
Bartlet, "The Apostolic Age."
Dods, "Introduction to the New Testament."
Hastings, "One Volume Dictionary of the Bible."
Commentary: Lumby, "The Acts of the Apostles," in the Cambridge Bible for Schools and Colleges.

Topics for Special Study:

1. Content of the apostolic message.
2. The Jewish and Gentile conceptions of Christianity contrasted.
3. The Holy Spirit in the Book of Acts.
4. The form of organization of the Apostolic Church.
5. The history of Judaistic Christianity.

Topics for Class Discussion:

1. In what ways did Christianity, in the beginning, differ from Judaism as a religion?
2. The importance of the Resurrection to the Apostolic Church.
3. The leadership of Peter among the apostles.
4. The place of persecution in the growth of Christianity.
5. Why did Christianity spread more rapidly among the Gentiles than among the Jews?



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CHAPTER XVIII

THE LIFE AND LETTERS OF PAUL

Next to the Lord Jesus, Christianity owes more to the Apostle Paul than to any other one person. He it was who fashioned the Christian religion into the principal doctrinal forms in which it was held by the Church for centuries, who secured for it its first wide hearing before the Gentiles, who planted its churches in a score of the strategic centers of the great Roman Empire, and who presented to the world an example of such boundless energy, devotion, courage, and self-sacrifice as to inspire admiration in all and to beget those same qualities in thousands of Christian believers.

I. Birth and Childhood.

Paul, whose early name was Saul, was born in the latter part of the first decade of the Christian era in Tarsus, a large and commercially important city of Cilicia, in Asia Minor. By birth he was a Hebrew of the tribe of Benjamin, a Pharisee, and a Roman citizen. Beyond this very little is known of his parents. Paul himself never directly refers to them in his writings. From the educational advantages given the son it is inferred that they were well-to-do people. Of other children there were at least one; Paul's sister is referred to in Acts 23: 16.

Tarsus, in addition to its commercial interests, was the seat of a university of renown, and students came from all countries. This may have had some influence in awakening the mind of the Jewish lad and implanting within him the desire for an education. His own statement, that he was

"brought up in this city at the feet of Gamaliel" (Acts 22:5), implies that in his later childhood, at least, his parents either removed to Jerusalem or sent the boy thither, that he might be under the teaching of the greatest Jewish rabbi of the day, Gamaliel, grandson of the still greater Hillel. We may be sure that in his childhood Paul had the advantage of the best Jewish home-training, which meant careful and painstaking religious instruction. In Tarsus, as a boy, he learned his trade, that of weaving Cilician goat's hair into a coarse fabric, which was used in the making of mats, shoes, and tents. Every Jewish son must needs be taught a trade, and this, crude and rough as it was, proved very useful to the persecuted apostle of later days.

II. Education.

Gamaliel, the leader of the more tolerant branch of the Pharisees, was so liberal as to introduce the Greek learning into his school at Jerusalem. It was undoubtedly a fortunate circumstance that it was in this school that the intolerant young Saul was placed. He made rapid progress in his studies, advanced beyond many of his fellow students in his knowledge of Judaism, and showed himself to be more exceedingly zealous for the traditions of the fathers than they. (See Gal. 1:14.) The mastery of the Scriptures to which he attained is shown in his later writings. He is able freely to quote at will from any part of the Old Testament, and the familiar phraseology leaves its imprint frequently on his pages. His accurate knowledge of the law and his skill in the Rabbinical learning, the result of his study in the schools, were valuable elements in his equipment for his later controversies with the Jewish leaders.

His Tarsian birth and Roman citizenship made contributions to his education in the wider sense. His early association with the cosmopolitan life of Tarsus gave him an understanding of Gentile thought and an insight into human nature in its universal aspects. A Roman was a citizen of

the world, and it must needs be difficult for one who inherited Roman citizenship to be dominated by a narrow religious exclusiveness or by intolerant prejudices. Paul's world-vision was the gift of his birthplace and his birthright. His genius for organization was also a Roman talent.

III. Early Career as a Pharisee and Persecutor.

Paul first comes prominently into view in connection with the death of the first Christian martyr, the beloved Stephen. The charge made against him reminds us strongly of that made against Jesus. The same spirit is manifest, and in this case also it is allowed to work out to its conclusion, the brutal murder of an innocent and holy man. The ringleaders in the assault "laid down their garments at the feet of a young man named Saul," the statement giving us the impression that he was the master whose directions they obeyed and whose favor they coveted. From this time his madness became intensified until he himself went to the extreme length of entering into the houses of Christians, dragging out men and women, and delivering them into prison. He came into such prominence in this work that his name inspired terror in the hearts of the Christians everywhere; he was recognized as so effective a persecutor by his fellow-religionists that the Sanhedrin appointed him as a special agent to stamp out the Christian heresy in the city of Damascus.

IV. His Conversion and Early Christian Life.

But God had other work than this for Saul. While on the way to Damascus he met with an experience that suddenly and completely changed the course of his life. His conversion is the most striking, and the record of it given most fully, of any in the New Testament. The story is thrice told in Acts, once by the author in the course of his own narrative (9:1-16), and thrice as a report of speeches made by Paul (22:4-16; 26:9-18). In addition Paul refers many

times, directly and indirectly, to the experience in his letters. We can consider briefly only certain important elements of the conversion.

Preparation. The occurrence seems at first glance to be wholly sudden. From various statements of Paul and from our knowledge of his early life, however, we can see how it was being prepared for, although doubtless unconsciously to Paul himself. His native bigotry and intolerance, and the influence of early Roman associations and of the liberal Greek spirit of his school life were at strife within him. Added to this was a deep consciousness of the inadequacy of the law unto salvation. Possessed of a deep moral earnestness, he was inwardly dissatisfied with the principle of outward conformity to the law as a basis for salvation. This early consciousness of the powerlessness of the law is reflected in such later statements as that of Romans, chapter 7.

Physical Accompaniments. The accounts given in the Acts name certain accompaniments of the conversion of Paul which place it in a class almost by itself. These are: "a light from heaven," "a voice," a falling to the earth, blindness, returning sight at the laying-on of hands by Ananias. Paul lays no stress upon these in his own writings. We can not doubt, however, that it was this "light" which gave him the figure which he so often uses, as, for example, in 1 Tim. 6:16; Rom. 8:18; 2 Thess. 1:9-11; 2:8.

Appearance of Jesus to Paul. The apostle is ever sure that in his conversion experience he saw Jesus. He did not account this a subjective vision, but rather speaks of it confidently as an objective appearance to him of the Risen Lord. In his summary account of the appearance of Christ to His disciples after his resurrection, he includes that to himself (1 Cor. 15:4-8); and again, he makes the fact of his having "seen Jesus" a mark of his apostleship (1 Cor. 9:1).

Inner Revelation. Paul lays emphasis upon the fact of soul experience. Most important of all statements concern-

ing his conversion is that of Galatians 1:11-17. In this he speaks of a Providence which has been working even from his birth in preparing him for his ministry to the Gentiles, and which culminated in an inner revelation. Those words, "It was the good pleasure of God . . . to reveal His Son in me," sound the greatest depths of Paul's conversion.

The Importance of the Conversion. To Paul himself his conversion was the greatest event of his life. It was to him the real beginning of life. It revealed to him his former blindness, ignorance, and sin, and a present power unto salvation; gave him an ever-present Lord, his commission of world-evangelization, his authority for proclaiming His message, a personal assurance that was never dimmed, and a confidence that enabled him to stand unashamed and unabashed before councils and kings.

Events Following His Conversion. The ministry of Ananias to Paul was a means of introducing him to the Christian community at Damascus (Acts 9:10-19). His religious zeal would not allow him to remain silent; immediately he began to proclaim in the synagogues to those whom a few days before he had intended to incite against the Christians that Jesus was the Son of God. His preaching at first produced amazement, then consternation, conviction in some, and in others wrath. He who had been persecutor, now was persecuted and fled for his life (Acts 9:20-25).

We might conclude from the statement of Acts (1:26) that Paul immediately returned to Jerusalem, but this impression is corrected by his own special statement (Gal. 1:17) that he did not go to Jerusalem, but instead "into Arabia," and later returned to Damascus. Arabia is an indefinite term; exactly where he went, and with what purpose in view, can only be conjectured. The common thought is that this was a period of retirement, affording opportunity of mental adjustment, during which the new apostle was preparing himself for his changed career. The length of his stay was somewhat less than three years (Gal. 1:18). After his return

to the scene of his conversion, Paul went up to Jerusalem, where his experience of persecution at Damascus was repeated (Acts 9:26-30). This Jerusalem visit gave Paul an opportunity to become acquainted with Peter and, doubtless, to hear from his lips much of the story of the earthly life of Jesus. His stay in Jerusalem was brief; his fellow Christians prevailed upon him not to endanger his life by remaining, and, being escorted by them to Cæsarea, he went into "the regions of Syria and Cilicia" (Gal. 1:18-21). There follows an obscure period of perhaps ten years; his own statement in Galatians indicates that he was occupied in successfully preaching the Christian faith; the statement of Acts 15:41, that on a later occasion Paul "went through Syria and Cilicia, confirming the Churches," leads to the inference that these were Churches which he himself had founded in this early period of his ministry. We can not doubt that a part of this time was spent in labors in Tarsus, his birthplace. In Tarsus, at any rate, he was found by Barnabas, and summoned to Antioch, in Northern Syria, to assist in the teaching and building up in the faith of a large Church made up of Gentile believers. For a year Barnabas and Paul remained in Antioch as co-laborers (Acts 11:25, 26). From Antioch they carried a contribution for famine relief to Jerusalem, and then finally took their leave of this mother Church of the Christian name to embark on their wider mission (Acts 11:27-30; 12:35).

V. The Career of Paul as Apostle to the Gentiles.

It is here to be recalled that with 13:1 begins the second part of the Book of Acts. This second half is devoted to a rapid sketch of the journeys and labors of Paul, and supplies us with our outline of his missionary career.

1. *First Missionary Journey.* Certain prophets of the Church in Antioch became impressed that the time had come for Barnabas and Paul to proceed on their divinely appointed mission to the Gentile world. With prayer, fasting, and lay-

ing-on of hands they started them forth (Acts 13:1-3). From Seleucia, the seaport of Antioch, accompanied by John Mark, they sailed to Cyprus, landed at Salamis, its eastern port, and journeyed through the whole island to Paphos, preaching as opportunity was had in Jewish synogogues. At Paphos they were summoned to attend upon Sergius Paulus, a Roman proconsul. In his presence they were withstood by one Bar-Jesus, a representative of an Oriental cult, whom Paul controverted so successfully that the Roman official was won to discipleship (Acts 13:4-12). It is at this stage in the narrative that Luke substitutes, without explanation, the name Paul for Saul. From Paphos the party went by ship to Perga, on the coast of Pamphylia; where, for some reason not clear to us, John Mark turned back; while Paul and Barnabas proceeded overland to Pisidian Antioch, an important civic and commercial center of Asia Minor. "At Antioch and onwards, Paul takes the lead in speech and action. 'Barnabas and Saul' set out on the expedition; 'Saul and Barnabas' will return." *(Findlay.)* The work was addressed first to the Jews, as was Paul's custom, but when they sharply opposed, the missionaries turned to the Gentiles, and labored with such marked success that the Jews were aroused to urgent measures, secured the aid of the Roman officials, and drove them from the city (Acts 13:13-52). The missionaries stopped next at Iconium, from which place, after a stay of some length, during which a number of Gentile converts were made, they were again beset by persecution and compelled to flee: first to Lystra, and later to Derbe, near-by cities. At the former city Paul performed the first cure attributed to him in the Acts, and there also he underwent stoning (2 Cor. 11:25). At Derbe many converts were made. From here the missionaries were suffered to depart in peace. Turning homeward, they visited the scenes of their recent labors, preached in Perga, and then took ship at Attalia for Antioch (Acts 14:1-28). The entire journey of about fourteen hundred miles by ship and on foot had occupied between two

and three years. In this time the gospel had been preached over a wide extent of territory, and at least four Gentile Churches had been founded.

The period of stay at Antioch was marked by an important conference, the Council of Jerusalem (Acts 15:1-35; Gal. 2:1-10), at which Paul's contention that Gentile converts to Christianity were not bound by the provisions of the Jewish law, was granted. The apparent exceptions were made as a concession to Jewish social customs. This decision was a vital matter, not only to the success of Christian missionary endeavor among the Gentiles, but to the gospel itself, since involved in it was the whole question of whether Christianity was to be merely a new branch grafted on to Judaism or whether it was to be a new religion superseding Judaism.

2. *Second Missionary Journey.* The immediate purpose of Paul at the beginning of the second journey was to "visit the brethren in every city" wherein he had proclaimed the gospel (Acts 15:36-41). Owing to a disagreement between Paul and Barnabas as to whether John Mark, who had previously turned back at Pamphylia, should accompany them, Paul chose a new companion, Silas, and proceeded overland through Syria and Cilicia, the scene of his first missionary labors, to Derbe and Lystra.

At Lystra they found a new companion in travel, Timothy, a half-Jew, who was to prove himself Paul's steadfast and loyal friend and helper. The desire of the missionaries was to extend the work of evangelization into other parts of Asia Minor, but God had yet larger plans, and at Troas, Paul heard in the night the "Macedonian call" (Acts 16:1-10). He was not one to hesitate when the question was that of carrying the gospel into new fields. At once the decision was made to enter Europe.

The place of his first labor was Philippi, the chief city of Macedonia (Acts 16:11-40). Here immediate results attended his preaching, and in a stay of considerable duration Paul laid the foundation of the Church which in later years

he rejoiced to speak of as his "joy and crown" (Phil. 4:1). To one of his burning zeal it was merely incidental that at Philippi he suffered one of "many perils from the heathen," one of many imprisonments, and one of three beatings with Roman rods.

Leaving Philippi, Paul and Silas labored in Thessalonica, the modern Salonica, to-day a prosperous city of Turkey in Europe, then as now possessed of important commercial interests, a center from which the gospel might spread by land and by sea. Again a Church was established, and many Gentiles, worshipers of idols, were received into membership. Luke's narrative suggests a brief stay of three weeks' duration, but we know from Paul's own words that twice while he remained in Thessalonica the Church at Philippi sent him aid (Phil. 4:16), and also that he there worked at his trade of tent-making (Thess. 2:9). These statements indicate a longer period of time.

At Berœa the gospel was received with pleasing readiness. Disturbances followed, but before an open outbreak occurred Paul went to some near-by seaport, and thence by ship to Athens, leaving Silas and Timothy to continue the work for a time, and then to follow him (Acts 17:10-15). At his departure from Macedonia he had implanted the gospel in three important centers, from whence it was carried rapidly throughout all the province. Paul's stay in Athens was short, and so far as we have record no definite results were accomplished (Acts 17:16-34). Timothy seems to have rejoined him and to have been sent as Paul's messenger to Thessalonica (1 Thess. 3:1), while Paul himself later pushed on to Corinth, the capital city of Achaia, probably his objective point when he left Berœa. His ministry in Corinth is of especial interest for a number of reasons. On his arrival he met Aquila and Priscilla, who were thereafter closely associated with him in fellowship and labors. Jewish influence was slight in Corinth, and the Jews' attempt at persecution here signally failed. A Church was founded, to which

was addressed two of the apostle's principal letters. Paul remained in Corinth for eighteen months (read Acts 18:1-18; compare 1 Cor. 2:1-5; 2 Cor. 11:7-9). Probably within the first six months he wrote the *First Letter to the Thessalonians;* this was followed just a little later by the *Second Letter to the Thessalonians.*

FIRST LETTER TO THE THESSALONIANS.

1. *Occasion and Purpose.* Timothy had come from Thessalonica bearing favorable tidings concerning the Church (1 Thess. 3:6, 7) and Paul writes: (a) To return greetings and to send a message of affection; (b) to comfort them concerning their afflictions (3:4, 6-8); (c) to exhort them as a father to even greater love, faith, and virtue (3:11-13), (compare 2:11; 5:22); (d) to correct the misapprehension of some who thought that those of their friends who had died before the second coming of the Lord could not share in the triumph of His kingdom (4:13-18); and (e) to warn against a tendency, which some had manifested, toward immorality (4:2-7).

2. *Character of the Letter.* It is not a doctrinal letter, has no note of controversy, and is one of the most gentle and affectionate of Paul's Epistles (2:8, 17-20; 3:9, 10). It bears testimony to the expectation, which prevailed generally in the early Church, of the immediate return of Christ (4:16, 17). Special interest attaches to it by virtue of its being the first of the Epistles of Paul and therefore perhaps the earliest written document of the Christian religion.

3. *The Thessalonian Christians.* The letter bears strong testimony to the Christian character of these recent converts from heathenism. They are an example to others (1:7), their faith has sounded abroad (1:8), they have manifested strong brotherly love (4:9, 10) and a spirit of patience (1:3), joy (1:6), and long-suffering (2:14).

SECOND LETTER TO THE THESSALONIANS.

Occasion and Content. Doubtless the apostle had again received direct information as to the situation in the Church at Thessalonica. It appears from the letter that the disciples' faith in God had continued to increase (1:3), that brotherly love abounded (1:3), and that the Christians showed much patience in the presence of continued affliction and persecutions (1:4). The Church was, however, increasingly troubled concerning the coming of Christ (2:1-3, 15), the moral disorder among some had increased (3:6), and there was a marked tendency among the disciples toward idleness (3:7-11). The coming of the Lord may almost be stated to be the theme of the letter. Paul attributes the prevalent restlessness to the belief that the day

of the Lord is already at hand and declares that certain things must first occur. The statements concerning the "man of sin" and the "mystery of lawlessness," and, in fact, the whole passage, 2:3-12, is exceedingly difficult, if not quite impossible of interpretation. Rather than choose among the multitude of different interpretations, we probably can not do better than to say with Augustine, "Forsooth, I confess myself to be ignorant of what Paul might mean." Directions are given concerning Church discipline (3:6, 14, 15), and concerning idleness (3:12). The teaching of this Epistle on the Christian duty of courage, calmness, and industry are clear, strong, and of permanent value. This is the shortest letter of Paul addressed to a Church.

From Cenchrea, a harbor of Corinth, Paul set sail for Antioch; on the way he made a hurried visit to Ephesus, where he left his new companions Aquila and Priscilla, then touched at Cæsarea, and possibly went up to Jerusalem (Acts 18:19-22).

His second journey occupied approximately three years, extended over a large part of the eastern Roman Empire, and effectually planted the gospel on the continent of Europe. The apostle had traveled in the slow and laborious fashion of ancient days scarcely less than three thousand miles, had labored in some of the most important centers of influence and civilization in the Roman world, and had demonstrated the power of the gospel to gain a foothold among the Gentiles under most unfavorable conditions. During this journey more than ever before Paul showed his splendid imperial spirit and made his greatest conquests for the cross.

THE LETTER TO THE GALATIANS.

1. *To Whom Written.* The term Galatia as used in the Epistle is ambiguous; it may refer to Galatia proper, a country in the interior of Asia Minor inhabited by Gallic tribes which had migrated thither from the West, or it may refer to the Roman province of Galatia, to the southwest of the former region. If the first mentioned view, called the North Galatian theory, is maintained, the letter was written to certain unknown churches in a region which Paul is not definitely known to have visited; if the second or South Galatian view is held, the letter was written to the churches in Pisidian Antioch, Iconium, Lystra, and Derbe, established on the first missionary journey. The greater probability may be said to be with the South Galatian theory.

2. Occasion and Purpose of the Letter. Originally the Galatians had received the gospel which Paul had preached with much enthusiasm (4:12-15), and for a time they had run well (5:7). Recently, however, Judaizing influences had come in, probably under the leadership of some one individual of authority (1:8; 3:1), and they were being led into a subserviency to the Jewish law (4:9, 10; 5:3). To Paul this is not merely a retrograde movement, it is a subversion of the gospel, an actual renunciation of Christ (1:6; 5:2, 4). Paul writes to re-establish the authority of his teaching among them, and to win them back again to the pure gospel of salvation by faith in Jesus Christ, apart from works of the law.

3. Characterization of the Letter. This is pre-eminently the Epistle of Freedom. By this letter Paul settled forever the vexatious question of the relation of Christians to the Jewish law. He perceived clearly what no other apostle seems to have realized, that to concede anything else than the cross of Christ as essential to salvation was to minimize and eventually to nullify the work of Christ. Hence he threw himself with all his power into the controversy. He writes with enthusiasm, with warmth, with vehemence, almost, as Weiss says, "with passionate irritation." He maintains throughout a spirit of severe remonstrance; unlike his other letters, there is here no word of congratulation, praise, or thanksgiving; he writes with one thought, one purpose, from the first sentence to the last.

3. Third Missionary Journey and Imprisonment in Cæsarea and in Rome. When Paul again left Antioch it was at first to visit certain Churches located, according to the phrase of Luke, in "the country of Galatia and Phrygia" (Acts 18:23). Later, in fulfillment of his promise, he came to Ephesus, where he made what was for him a stay of great length—three years; a period marked by notable successes, heroic labors, great privations, and strange perils. (Read Acts 19:1 to 20:1; 20:18-35; 1 Cor. 4:11-13; 1 Cor. 15:32; 2 Cor. 1:8-11.) From Ephesus the *First Letter to the Corinthians* was written.

THE FIRST LETTER TO THE CORINTHIANS.

1. Occasion and Purpose. Tidings came from Corinth to Paul bearing unfavorable news concerning the Corinthian church. He wrote them a letter (5:9), now lost, in which he rebuked evil and commanded them to separate themselves from immoral persons, promised to visit them, and gave directions concerning an offering. Meanwhile, members of the household of Chloe came to him with additional information concerning the situation in the Church (1:11); other friends also came to him

from Corinth (16:17), and finally he received a letter from the Church. From these various sources he learned: (a) that there were four distinct factions in the Church; (b) that there was immorality in the Church, one case being particularly heinous; and (c) that members of the Church had disagreements and carried these quarrels into the civil courts. Their letter asked certain practical questions concerning important matters. Paul wrote the Epistle in order to rebuke the evils existent in the Church and to answer their questions.

2. *The Church of Corinth.* It must be remembered that Corinth was one of the most wicked cities of the ancient world, and that this Church was surrounded by heathen customs and practices; many of its members had been but recently converted from heathenism to Christianity. It was far from being an ideal Church, but there were those among its members who were true Christians lacking in nothing (1:4-8). For the most part they were poor people, without pride of birth or learning (1:26).

3. *Character of the Letter.* It is noteworthy for its practical character; it concerns itself with the everyday life of the members of the Church. It treats of but one doctrine, that of the resurrection. Paul is here revealed as the bishop of souls, concerned for the welfare of each. The letter has some of the greatest passages of the New Testament; every Christian should be familiar with the chapter on "The Greatest Thing in the World" (Ch. 13); the Resurrection Chapter (Ch. 15); the contrast between earthly wisdom and heavenly foolishness (1:18-25); the description of the apostolic labors (4:9-13), and the description of the Christian race (9:24-27).

4. *Outline.* 1. Salutation, 1:1-3. 2. Thanksgiving, 1:4-9. 3. Practical and doctrinal instruction, 1:9—15:58. (1) Rebuke of divisions and the factional spirit, 1:10-42; (2) The case of the chief sinner, 5:1-13; (3) Lawsuits between Church members, 6:1-11; (4) Fornication, 6:12-20; (5) Concerning marriage, 7:1-40; (6) Concerning meats sacrificed to idols, 8:1—11:1; (7) Concerning head dress, 11:2-16; (8) Concerning the Lord's Supper, 11:17-34; (9) Concerning spiritual gifts, 12:1—14:40; (10) The resurrection, 15:1-58. 4. Special messages and the benediction, 16:1-24.

Lesson Outline:

Birth and childhood.
Education.
Early career as a Pharisee and persecutor.
Conversion and early Christian life.
The career of Paul as apostle to the Gentiles: First missionary journey; second missionary journey, with letters written during the period; third missionary journey begun.

Books for Reference:

Gilbert, "The Student's Life of Paul."
Stalker, "The Life of Paul."
Conybeare & Howson, "Life and Epistles of Paul."
Findley, "The Epistles of Paul the Apostle."
Stevens, "The Pauline Theology."
Sanday, "Commentary on Romans."
Hastings, "One Volume Dictionary."
Commentaries on the various Epistles in the "International Critical Commentary" series, and in the Cambridge Bible for Schools and Colleges.

Topics for Special Study:

1. The early education of Paul as a Jewish youth.
2. The dissatisfaction of Paul with Judaism.
3. Paul as a missionary.
4. Paul's Christian view of the law.
5. The inner life of an early Christian Church as seen in the Epistles to the Corinthians.

Topics for Class Discussion:

1. Influence of his Tarsian birth upon the life of Paul.
2. To what extent is the conversion of Paul to be taken as a normal type of conversion?
3. Compare the labors of Paul to those of a modern missionary.
4. The relation of Paul to the Churches which he founded.
5. The chief teachings of the Epistle to the Galatians.

CHAPTER XIX

LIFE AND LETTERS OF PAUL—CONTINUED

Third Missionary Journey—Continued. When Paul wrote First Corinthians he was expecting before long to leave Ephesus. This he probably did. There is a total absence of details as to his movements after leaving that city. We do know this, that some time later he went into Macedonia (Acts 20:1), having been disappointed in his expectation of meeting Titus in Troas with tidings from the Corinthian Church (2 Cor. 2:12, 13). After he came into Macedonia his expectation was fulfilled—he met Titus, and in response, doubtless, to the message which he brought, wrote the *Second Epistle to the Corinthians.*

THE SECOND LETTER TO THE CORINTHIANS.

1. *Occasion and Purpose.* There is evidence that much more by way of communication passed between Paul and the Church at Corinth than has come down to us. Both our first and second letters are members of a series, of which others of the series have been lost. The apostle is intensely interested in this Church; it has caused him much care, perplexity, and grief, but he yearns over it as one of his own children. Titus has come with information and messages, and he writes out of affection and solicitude for them, in self-defense against the false charges of enemies, and to warn, exhort, and instruct them.

2. *Situation in the Church.* In general the condition of the Church has improved. The guilty have shown grief and repentance (7:9); the factional spirit has to a large extent disappeared, but in one respect the situation is intensified—defiant and slanderous opposition to Paul is manifested by some in the Church (Chapters 10 and 11).

3. *Character and Content of the Letter.* This letter is very different from the calm, clear, and definite 1 Corinthians. It is exceedingly emotional, showing mingled joy, grief, and indignation, is involved in style, almost impossible of analysis, and full of digressions in subject. It is intensely personal; the

apostle bares his heart and speaks forth his inmost thought and feeling. Here only he speaks of two secret matters of his inner life—his rapture of the "third heaven" (12:1-4), and his "thorn in the flesh" (12:7-9). As no other letter, it shows the intense personal opposition Paul encountered in his work; it was charged against him that his bodily presence was weak (10:10), that he was rude in speech (11:6), his words of no account (10:10), that he corrupted the Word of God (2:17), that his gospel was veiled (4:3), that he boasted unduly (10:8), that he was beside himself (5:3). These and many other slanderous and unjust charges may be read in the statements which Paul makes in self-defense.

Two especially noteworthy passages of the letter are—on giving, Chapters 8 and 9, and on his own labors and sufferings, 11:21-33.

Paul made a tour through Macedonia, visiting the Churches, and then proceeded into Achaia, where he spent three months (Acts 20:2, 3). During this time he probably fulfilled his long-delayed promise of visiting the Church at Corinth (1 Cor. 16:5-7; 2 Cor. 1:15, 16, 23; 12:14; 13:1). While staying with Gaius (Rom. 16:23; 1 Cor. 1:14) in Corinth, he wrote the *Epistle to the Romans.*

THE LETTER TO THE ROMANS.

1. *Occasion and Purpose.* Unlike the other letters of Paul to Churches, this was written to a Church which Paul had never visited. In pursuance of his plan to preach the gospel in the great centers of the empire, Paul had long desired to undertake work in Rome (1:13). At the time of writing, his purpose was hindered by the urgency of his journey to Jerusalem; that accomplished, he will come to them (15:22-29). Prevented, for the time being, from preaching to them, he will present to them his gospel in writing. Possibly he feared that his enemies, who had perverted the true gospel in other places, would reach Rome in advance of him, and desired to establish them beforehand by the spiritual gifts of his instruction and exhortation (1:11).

2. *Content of the Letter.* The central theme is stated in 1:16-17—the gospel the power of God unto salvation to every one that believes, both Jew and Greek. In elaboration of the theme, the apostle declares that sin and guilt are universal and justification by works of the law is impossible, 1:18—3:20; in Christ Jesus a new righteousness, achieved through faith apart from the law, has been manifested, 3:21-26; this salvation carries with it rich spiritual blessings, 5:1-11; whereas through Adam sin and death entered into the world, now through Jesus Christ has come this free gift of justification,

5:12-21; the justified man is dead to sin, Ch. 6; dead to law, Ch. 7. A triumphant assertion of the glory and blessedness of the Christian salvation follows, 8:18-39. Chapters 9, 10, and 11 treat of the rejection of Israel and the acceptance of the Gentiles. In 12:1—15:13, Paul exhorts his brethren to offer themselves to God, to live worthily as a member of the body of Christ, as a subject of the civil government, and as a member of society. The letter closes with personal messages, concluding exhortations, and doxology, 15:14—16:27.

From Corinth, Paul turns his face towards Jerusalem with the purpose of conveying to the poor among the saints an offering which he had been gathering gradually for over two years. (See 1 Cor. 16:1; 2 Cor. 9:6-22; 2 Cor. 9:2.) Seven men, representatives of the Churches, besides Luke, accompanied him (Acts 20:4-6). Traveling by a circuitous route, the company finally reached Jerusalem, eager to present to their Jewish brethren the gifts of the Gentile Christians, to hear testimony to the fruits of the gospel in new fields, and to defend the labors and the preaching of the missionary apostle against the charges of his enemies (Acts 20:4 to 21:16). But this mission, conceived in love and sacrifice, was to meet with tragic failure. Luke barely mentions the reception of the party by the Jerusalem brethren, and hurries on into the shameful account of the attack of the Jewish multitude upon Paul, his rescue by the chief captain, his speech to the people in Hebrew, his escape from scourging by a declaration of his Roman citizenship, his address before the Sanhedrin, the plot of the Jews to kill him, his conveyance escorted by soldiers to Cæsarea, his hearing, first before Felix, the procurator, and then before Felix and Drusilla; his detention for two years in prison without trial, his preliminary examination before Porcius Festus, successor to Felix; his appeal to the emperor, and his hearing before Agrippa II, the tetrarch, and Bernice. (Read Acts 21:17 to 26:32.)

Paul's appeal to the emperor necessitated a voyage to Rome, the capital of the empire, for trial. Luke gives account of the voyage as a fellow traveler, records a conference of Paul with the Jews in Rome, and abruptly ends the Book of

Acts with the statement that for two years Paul was accorded the privilege of living in his own rented quarters and of teaching the gospel to all who came to him (Acts 27:1 to 28:31). Additional light is shed on the imprisonment by statements in the epistles. (See Phil. 1:12-14; 4:18, 22; Eph. 3:1; 4:1; 6:21, 22; Philemon 1, 8-14, 22-24.) During this imprisonment Paul wrote the letters to the Philippians, Philemon, Colossians, and Ephesians.

THE LETTER TO THE PHILIPPIANS.

1. *Occasion and Purpose.* A remarkable bond of love, sympathy, and fellowship existed between this Church and its founder. Twice out of their poverty they sent him voluntary pecuniary aid. They were his solace in affliction, his joy and his crown. In them he found constant reasons for rejoicing. The letter is an expression of this relationship. It bears a message of love. This is the real occasion for writing. An opportunity for sending the message to them is afforded by the departure of Epaphroditus from Rome for Philippi. He has had no earlier opportunity of thanking them for their gift sent to him through this same messenger (Phil. 4:18).

2. *Characterization of the Letter.* This is a real letter, informal, familiar—a spontaneous utterance of love and gratitude. It has no logical plan, no doctrinal arguments. In the simple terms of intimate friendly intercourse, the essential substance of the gospel is presented. Paul is here, not the soldier engaged in battle, not the keen, abstruse advocate advancing arguments, but the tender, warm-hearted, loving friend, pastor, and brother. Read this letter often—the whole letter at one sitting, for its high spirit. It is splendid spiritual tonic.

THE LETTER TO PHILEMON.

The occasion of this letter is clearly shown in it. Onesimus, a runaway slave of Philemon of Colossae, in Rome came under the influence of Paul and became a Christian. Paul sends him back to his owner in the care of Tychicus, and with him this letter. It is, therefore, a letter to an individual on a private matter, but it is of inestimable worth for the revelation it bears of the power of the gospel to win and transform a poor slave, to soften harsh heathen customs, and to mediate between the classes of ancient society. "This letter became the Magna Charta of freedom throughout the world" (Farrar).

THE LETTER TO THE COLOSSIANS.

1. *Occasion and Purpose.* This letter, as Romans, was written to a Church not founded by Paul. Word had come to the apostle through Epaphras of the love and faith of the

Colossian Christians (1:7, 8), but also of false teaching disseminated among them. This teaching apparently had displaced Jesus Christ as the object of their reverence, love, faith, and worship, and had involved them in philosophical speculation (2:8), in the observance of circumcision, of feast days, new moons, and Sabbath days (2:11, 16), in the worship of angels (2:18), and had led them to profess a hidden wisdom (2:3), to show spiritual pride and exclusiveness, and to a neglect of the fundamental moral principles of Christianity. Paul writes to correct these errors and to restore Jesus Christ to His rightful place among them.

2. *Characterization of the Letter.* Colossians presents more fully than any other Epistle Paul's doctrine of the person of Christ. Over against the false teaching which had proven so attractive to them, Paul sets the thought of the supremely exalted nature and perfect spiritual work of Jesus Christ. Col. 1:15-20 should be remembered by every Christian as a most remarkable statement of the pre-eminence of the Savior.

THE LETTER TO THE EPHESIANS.

1. *To Whom Written.* The words "at Ephesus," of 1:1, are not found in three of the most important ancient manuscript copies. Paul was intimately acquainted with the Christians at Ephesus from his prolonged stay there, yet this letter has no personal greetings. Many hold that the letter was written, not to any one Church, but as an encyclical letter to be sent in turn to various Churches, the Church at Ephesus among others. (Note Col. 4:16, last clause.)

2. *Characterization of the Letter.* This letter is characterized by: (1) Its presentation of the exalted nature and office of Christ (1:20-23; 2:13-22); (2) its setting forth of the eternal purpose of God (2:3-5; 2:4-7; 3:9-12); (3) a broad catholic spirit; there is here no tone of controversy; the thought transcends local transitional issues and presents a picture of the triumphant universal Church of Christ of the future (2:11-22; 3:1-12; 4:4); (4) an exalted ideal of the Christian character and life (1:4, 15-23; 2:10; 3:14-21; 4:1-3; 5:1; 6:10-18). "In the depth of its theology, in the loftiness of its morals, in the way in which the simplest moral truths are based upon the profoundest religious doctrine, this Epistle is unparalleled. It is the most sublime, the most profound, the most advanced, the final utterance of Paul's gospel to the Gentiles." (Farrar.)

4. *The Closing Years.* The concluding statement of Acts leads to the inference that Paul was released from imprisonment, since no word is said concerning his death in that connection. There is no place in the preceding history where

the Pauline pastoral epistles seem to fit. By references in them to persons and places, together with statements of his hopes and plans for the future in the earlier letters, it is possible to form some idea of the ministry and travel of the last years of the apostle's life. We may be sure that a first thought was to visit once again as many as possible of the Churches he had founded from Corinth through Achaia, Macedonia, Asia Minor, and Syria. He had long desired to preach the gospel in Spain; tradition tells us that this desire was gratified. Places definitely mentioned are: Macedonia (1 Tim. 1:33), Crete (Titus 1:5), Nicopolis (Titus 3:12), Troas (2 Tim. 4:13), Corinth (2 Tim. 4:20), Miletus (2 Tim. 4:20). During these journeyings *First Timothy* and *Titus* were written.

THE FIRST LETTER TO TIMOTHY.

1. *Authenticity of the Pastoral Epistles.* From the pastoral character of the two letters addressed to Timothy and the letter to Titus, the three have been commonly known as the Pastoral Epistles. There is not the same unanimity of judgment among scholars concerning the genuineness of the Pastoral Epistles as concerning the earlier letters. Some profess not to be able to find a place or time for them in Paul's life; others object to them on the ground of their differences in vocabulary and style from the earlier letters, and yet others on the ground that they reflect a different condition in the Church. Many scholars hold that while these letters may have been somewhat amended by later hands, yet the substance of them is from the apostle. In the thought of the great majority of the Church, they always have been and doubtless will ever continue to be indissolubly connected with the name of the apostle Paul.

2. *Purpose and Content.* This is a letter of general instruction and exhortation to Paul's "true child in the faith." It reflects a condition in the Church at Ephesus, to which Timothy held an intimate relationship, which Paul desired to correct; he warns against false speculation and against legalistic teaching (1:3-11; 4:1-5; 6:20, 21), emphasizes the importance of Timothy himself living above all reproach (5:21, 22; 4:12; 6:11-16), sets a high standard in the type of men to be selected as office bearers in the Church (3:1-13), and shows concern about the order and conduct of Church government and services of worship (2:1, 2, 8; 3:14, 15).

THE LETTER TO TITUS.

Purpose and Content. The letter is one of counsel and instruction to Titus, whom Paul had left in Crete to "set in order the things that were wanting and appoint elders in every city" (1:5). The apostle urges that certain qualifications be observed in the selection of these office-bearers (1:5-10), and at the same time presents a lofty moral ideal for all Christians, the aged, the younger people, and slaves (2:1-15), exhorting Titus to himself present an example of good works (2:7, 8). With 1 Timothy this letter lays special stress on "sound doctrine" and "good works." The aggressive, original work of the great apostle has been done, his chief interest now is in guarding the integrity of the teaching he has committed to his disciples and protecting the fold from the old foes against whom he had often striven in the past and from the new enemies now for the first time appearing. The instructions concerning Church organization and administration are a part of this interest. These letters set his final seal to the work and teachings of his life."

On some unknown charge the aged apostle was again arrested, taken for the second time to Rome as a prisoner, and placed on trial. At his first hearing he was not condemned, but was remanded for further trial. From his dungeon he writes his last letter, *Second Timothy.*

THE SECOND LETTER TO TIMOTHY.

1. *Occasion and Purpose.* This is the last will and testament of the great apostle. Addressed to his beloved son Timothy, it is even more personal in tone than the first letter. He longs to see Timothy yet once more; "Do your utmost to come to me soon," he says (3:8). But he may not reach him in time, therefore he exhorts him to renewed zeal, courage, and activity (1:6, 7; 2:4-6), to keep faithfully the trust he has bequeathed to him (1:13, 14; 2:2, 15), and warns him of perilous times which will come (3:1-17).

2. *Paul's Situation Preceding His Death.* This letter brings us very near to the persecuted and suffering apostle. His situation in these last days is in some respects most pitiable. One and another of his friends has deserted him until, save for his faithful companion in travels, Luke, he is entirely alone. The government is now his fierce [illegible] (4:7). His imprisonment is very severe; it was difficult ev[illegible] to find him (1:17). He had felt many times before the pangs of hunger and thirst without a word of complaint; now, in his damp, cold dungeon he sighs for his cloak (4:13). The only prospect before him is that of immediate death (3:6). His lonely heart cries out for sympathy and companionship (4:9, 21). But in spite of all,

there runs through the entire letter an undertone of calm courage and triumphant faith.

Some time about 67 A. D., Paul's expectation of martyrdom was fulfilled. We can not follow him to the unknown place of execution, but our last view of him is that of a grand old soldier, bent with age, broken by sufferings, but still unbroken in courage and faith, rejoicing in the companionship of an ever-present Lord, enduring tribulation with patience and persecution with joy; assured of the past, rejoicing in the present, confident of the future. He faces death and is more than content. We can not doubt that with this spirit he met the ax of the Roman executioner.

VI. The Man and His Work.

The debt of the Christian world to Paul could hardly be overstated. He found Christianity a provincial religion, unorganized, unpopular among the people of its own origin, unknown to the world at large, without a literature, almost without doctrinal formulation, and with exceedingly few influential adherents. At his death, after not more than thirty-four years, largely through his influence and activity and that of his personal adherents, Christianity was world-wide in extent, had obtained a secure foothold in most of the important centers of the Roman Empire, was the religion of many thousands of Gentiles as well as Jews, some of its adherents belonging to the highest circles, had an ecclesiastical organization, had been formulated into doctrines that are still held by large portions of its constituency, and had called into existence the larger part of its sacred literature.

Paul was peculiarly fitted by nature and by grace for his great task. He possessed to a remarkable degree the imperial spirit. He could not possibly have been the leader of a sect or party. He was the first of the followers of Jesus to fully perceive the universal aspects of the Christian faith. Like Alexander, he ever sighed for new worlds to conquer.

He had a genius for organization. He transformed the Christians from a disorganized band fleeing before persecution into a compact army advancing to world conquest. He lacked the poetical mind, was not interested in art, and seems to have been entirely blind to the beauty and charms of nature. He admits also that he lacked the polish and art of the classical orator, that he was "rude in speech;" yet by his incisive utterance, logical force, ready wit and sarcasm, his adroitness and tact, his power of analysis, his emotional fire, he proved to be a most powerful advocate. He invariably compelled assent or aroused opposition. He had a finely strung nervous organization, was subject to visions and revelations, and to sudden revulsions of feeling, passing in a moment from calmness to vehemence, from affection to indignation. He was ever a man of intense moral conviction and deep religious interest. After his conversion he was wholly given up to his Lord—with all the wealth of his emotional nature, with all the energies of his physical being, with all the powers of his mind, absolutely devoted to Jesus Christ. He was a slave who gloried in his captivity. Truly, for him to live was Christ. It was this that gave him his power. Miracles are ascribed to him, but he himself attached little importance to them; he "spake with tongues," but did not regard the fact as of great importance.

The Churches loved him. Men were bound to him by bonds of intense brotherly affection. It could not well be otherwise when we recall the deep love which he held toward his converts; they were his "children," and he yearned after them with a mother's love.

His letters were doubtless all written under stress, messages of the hour, and the immediate occasion. They are the letters of Paul, the missionary, the evangelist, the advocate; not at all of Paul the scholar or the theologian. He never paused to polish a paragraph, to round out a period, or to fully and systematically state a doctrine. "His thoughts hurry each other" through sentences that bear the impress of ur-

gency and haste. Yet from this very fact they have the advantage of close contact with practical life; they touch our lives and move and help us because they were never far removed from every-day life. They have a perennial freshness and charm; to study them closely at any time is to find in them new meaning and new power.

Lesson Outline:

Third missionary journey and imprisonment in Cæsarea and Rome (continued), with letters written during the period.
The closing years, with letters of the period.
The man and his work.

Books for Reference:

Gilbert, "The Student's Life of Paul."
Stalker, "The Life of Paul."
Conybeare & Howson, "Life and Epistles of Paul."
Findley, "The Epistles of Paul the Apostle."
Stevens, "The Pauline Theology."
Sanday, "Commentary on Romans."
Hastings, "One Volume Dictionary."
Commentaries on the various Epistles in the "International Critical Commentary" series, and in the Cambridge Bible for Schools and Colleges.

Topics for Special Study:

1. Paul as a writer.
2. Paul as a theologian.
3. Paul's doctrine of the future life.
4. The friends of Paul.
5. Greek influence in the teaching of Paul.

Topics for Class Discussion:

1. The value of Roman citizenship to Paul.
2. The effect of Paul's imprisonment upon him.
3. How is the fact to be accounted for that one man had so large a part in the founding of the Christian Church among the Gentiles?
4. What was Paul's claim to apostleship?
5. Discuss the religious life of Timothy.

CHRONOLOGY OF THE LIFE OF PAUL.

According to Various Scholars.

Events.	Conybeare and Howson.	Lightfoot.	Wendt.	Blass.	Burton.	McGiffert.	Ramsay.
Conversion, ...	36 (?)	36 (34)	34–35	30 (?)	36	31–32	33
First Visit to Jerusalem, . .	38 (?)	38 (37)	37 (38)	33	39	34–35	35 (?)
First Missionary Journey, .	48–49	48 (?)	45–50	45–46	46–49	Before 45	47–49
Conference at Jerusalem, .	50	51	51 (52)	47	50 or 51	45 or 46	49
Second Missionary Journey,	51–54	51–54	51–54 (52–55)	48–50	51–54	46–49	50–53
Third Missionary Journey,	54–58	54–58	54–58 (55–59)	50–54	54–58	49–52	53–57
Arrest at Jerusalem, ...	58	58	58 (59)	54	58	53	57
First Roman Captivity, . .	61–63	61–63	61–63 (62–64)	57–59	61–63	56–58	60–62
Death	68	68 (?)	64	. . . .	65	58	67

CHAPTER XX

GENERAL EPISTLES AND REVELATION

I. The Catholic Epistles.

From the time of the Church Fathers this term has been employed to designate the group of seven New Testament books bearing the names of James, Peter, John, and Jude. The origin and meaning of the term in this connection is uncertain, but it is reasonable to suppose that it was applied to these letters as addressed, not to individuals or particular Churches, but to the Church universal, or to groups of Churches. For our purpose we also include under this head the Epistle to the Hebrews.

1. The Epistle of James.

Authorship. The author styles himself "James, a servant of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ" (1:1). As the name was very common among the Jews, this is indecisive. Tradition identifies the writer as James the Lord's brother, and this is generally held to be correct.

To Whom Written. "To the twelve tribes which are of the dispersion," says the superscription (1:1); *i. e.*, Jewish Christians outside of Palestine.

Purpose. To fortify Christians in their trials (1:2; 2:6-7; 5:1-6), and to correct errors in their personal conduct and their Church life (1:19-21; 2:14-26; 4:1 to 5:11; 2:1-9).

General Character. The epistle is characterized by (a) a lack of plan; one subject follows another without any appar-

ent order or connection of thought; (b) an absence of developed doctrine; we miss the doctrinal emphasis of Paul's writings; the Christian faith is stated in terms of moral excellence; he that doeth righteousness is accepted of God (c) a pronounced Jewish tone; reference is frequently made to the law, and hardly at all to the gospel, and there is a marked dependence on the wisdom books of the Old Testament; (d) its reflection of the sharp social contrasts prevailing in the civilization of the time; (e) its nearness to nature, and the number of allusions to nature and to natural objects.

2. The First Epistle of Peter.

Authorship. The letter names Peter as the author, and this has seldom been disputed. The argument for its genuineness is very strong.

To Whom Written. It is addressed to Christians in the provinces of Asia Minor. The words "the elect who are sojourners of the dispersion" (1:1) points to Jews, but other statements, as 2:9, 10; 4:3, clearly indicate that the author also had Gentile Christians in mind.

Purpose. Those to whom the apostle writes are suffering severe persecution (1:7; 3:17; 4:12), and he writes to comfort and sustain them. The letter is especially rich in consolation and has been a source of strength to those in trial through all ages. They were also subjected to manifold temptations from their immoral heathen environment (1:13-16; 2:11, 12; 4:1-6), and the apostle exhorts them to purity and holiness. The letter has many words and phrases which remind us of Peter's personality and of incidents in his life.

3. The Second Epistle of Peter.

Authorship. This letter was late in obtaining recognition by the Church, and that Peter is its author has been strenuously denied by many authorities, both ancient and modern. Its authorship must be regarded as uncertain.

To Whom Written. The letter does not state; Spitta and Zahn, two scholars who have elaborately defended the Petrine authorship of the Epistle, hold that it was written to Jewish Christians.

Purpose. Three prominent passages of the letter speak of false teachers (2:1-22; 3:3-7, 16). These statements show the main purpose to be to guard the readers against heretical teachings.

4. The First Epistle of John.

Authorship. This Epistle, in common with Hebrews, is peculiar in not naming an author in the superscription. From a very early period in the history of the Church it has been almost universally attributed to the Apostle John.

To Whom Written. Probably as an encyclical letter to Churches in Asia Minor.

Character and Purpose. It has not at all the form of a letter, lacking not only an address, but the customary personal messages and greetings. It is more nearly a sermon or pastoral address. The purpose is stated in 1:3, 4, to be that the readers may have fellowship with the writer, himself an eye-witness of the Word of Life, and share his fellowship with the Father and with Jesus Christ, and thereby make his joy full. To this end he proceeds to announce the message which he has received, laying special stress upon certain conceptions and truths, as follows: God is light (1:5); they who truly have fellowship with him "walk in the light," *i. e.*, do deeds of practical righteousness (1:6, 7; 2:9-11; 3:17-23); the love of God for His children (3:1, 2; 4:8-11, 16, 19); the obligation of Christians to love one another (2:10; 3:10-24; 4:7-21; 5:1, 2); the propitiatory work of Jesus Christ (1:7; 2:1, 2; 4:10). Other prominent ideas of the Fourth Gospel are emphasized, as "abiding in Christ" (2:24, 28, and elsewhere).

5, 6. The Second and Third Epistles of John.

Authorship. Undoubtedly by the same author as the First Epistle.

To Whom Written. The Second Epistle to a particular individual, or to a Church; the third to a certain Gaius.

Character and Purpose. Both letters are personal; the first to warn against false teachers, whom he has reason to believe those addressed are in danger of; the second to commend the hospitality and Christian character of Gaius and to assure him of the writer's expectation of a visit shortly.

7. The Epistle of Jude.

Authorship. The superscription names as the author "Jude, a servant of Jesus Christ, a brother of James;" by which is probably meant that Jude who was a brother of James, the author of the Epistle and brother of our Lord.

To Whom Written. The intended readers are unnamed, and there are no means of determining who they may have been.

Purpose. The situation closely resembles that of Second Peter. False teachers, who are also immoral in conduct, have come in and boldly propagate their errors in the meetings of the congregation. The author writes to expose and condemn these ungodly men, and to exhort his readers to adhere to and contend for the true faith, and to exemplify purity of life. The letter contributes to an appreciation of the extent and seriousness of the difficulties with which the early Church had to contend.

8. Hebrews.

Authorship. Many different names have been proposed, but scholars have never been able to come to agreement. The one almost unanimous opinion is that it was not written by the Apostle Paul.

To Whom Written. Probably to Jewish Christians of some definite locality.

Purpose. To prevent apostasy from Christianity to Judaism, or, as suggested by some writers, to prevent apostasy from Christianity altogether. (Note, *e. g.,* 3:12-15; 10:23-39.)

Contents. The author endeavors to achieve his purpose by elaborately setting forth in a series of comparisons the superiority of the religion of Jesus Christ to that which preceded it. The keyword of the book is "better." The central thought of Christ is that of His priestly function, by which Christians are enabled to have free access to God, and are brought into filial relation with Him. The apologetic presentation (1:1—10:18) is followed by a series of urgent exhortations to steadfastness (10:19—13:25). The following outline of the argumentative section will enable the student to trace the course of the argument: (1) The revelation through the Son superior to that through the prophets (1:1-3); (2) to that through angels (1:4—2:18); (3) the Son higher than Moses the faithful servant (3:1-6); the statement followed by warnings and exhortations (3:7—4:13); (4) the Son a High Priest superior to Aaron and his successors (5:1—10:18), not of the Levitical line, but of the order of Melchisedek, the ideal type.

II. The Book of Revelation.

Authorship. The writer speaks of himself as John, servant of God. He has been generally identified with John, author of the Fourth Gospel, but this is disputed on various grounds by many modern scholars. Some assign it to another John, the presbyter; others to an unknown author.

Character and Purpose. Revelation stands almost alone in the Scripture. With Daniel it belongs to that class of Jewish writing which succeeded prophecy, the Apocalypses. Many examples are found in the Jewish literature of the period. This literature was the outgrowth of persecution and

spiritual and temporal distress, and was written "to solve the difficulties connected with a belief in God's righteousness and the suffering condition of His servants on earth." *(Charles.)* The writer would beget patience, resignation, steadfastness, and endurance in his readers by the assurance that in spite of present distress God intends a mighty and sure deliverance for His people. The message is couched in obscure symbols, images, and in visions.

Interpretation and Present Value. The key to the meaning of much of the book is not now in the possession of the Church. Innumerable schemes of interpretation have been applied to the visions as prophecies of the present and of the future, with the result of confusion and grave error. The value of the book lies not in a disclosure of unseen mysteries, but in its testimony to the faith and hope of the persecuted Church of Christ and its power to comfort, sustain, and inspire burdened, sorrowing, and oppressed souls of every age.

Lesson Outline:

The Catholic Epistles: James, First Peter, Second Peter, First John, Second John, Third John, Jude, Hebrews.
The Book of Revelation.

Books for Reference:

Bennett, "The General Epistles."
Plummer, "The Epistles of St. John."
Lumby, "The Epistles of St. Peter."
Farrar, "The Messages of the Books."
Commentaries on separate Epistles: James, Mayor, "The Epistle of James;" Hebrews, Goodspeed, "Epistle to the Hebrews;" Revelation, Swete, "The Apocalypse of St. John."

Topics for Special Study:

1. Comparison of the Book of James with the Sermon on the Mount.
2. The teaching of First John as related to the Fourth Gospel.
3. The purpose of the Epistle to the Hebrews.
4. Non-biblical apocalyptic literature of the Jews.

Topics for Class Discussion:

1. Reasons for holding that Hebrews was not written by Paul.
2. Principal teachings of First Peter.
3. The state of the Church as reflected in the letters to Timothy and to Titus.
4. As reflected in the first three chapters of Revelation.
5. The counsels of Paul to teachers in the epistles to Timothy and to Titus.

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Apocrypha - a collection of books included in the Septuagint and Vulgate versions but not in the canonical Hebrew Scriptures; generally rejected by the Protestant churches. 1+2 Esdras, Tobit, Judith, Esther X, 4-XVI, Wisdom, Ecclesiasticus, Baruch, Song of the Three Holy children, History of Susanna, Bel and the Dragon, Prayer of Manasses, 1+2 Maccabees.

Antilegomena - "those books whose claims to a place in the canon of the New Testament were temporarily disputed; including Hebrews, James, Jude, 2 Peter, 2+3 John, + Revelation. (meaning from Gr. anti, against + legō, speak)

meaning of apocrypha - from Gr. apo, away + kryptō, conceal, but in the 2d century the word seems to have been associated with 'spurious' and ultimately to have settled down to that meaning

meaning of apocalypse, - from Gr. apo, from + kalyptō, cover - "an unveiling or showing forth of things hidden"

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